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THE NEW

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The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

SIR SAMUEL HOARE'S speech on Wednesday had a *succès fou* in the Assembly. It was simple and unemotional, but emphatic on the points where emphasis was wanted, and it made it clear at long last where Great Britain stands. It avoided rhetorical threats, and indeed in the passage referring to the access to colonial raw materials it showed an eminently conciliatory spirit, as well as wisdom. But it was a warning, stronger than most people had expected, not only to Italy but to France. If the French are not ready to co-operate with us in supporting the League in this crisis, why should they expect us to be at their side in another crisis, when it is they who are menaced with aggression? British opinion, in plain language, will not treat the Covenant as a scrap of paper *vis-à-vis* Italy, and as sacrosanct where Germany is concerned. The word is now with M. Laval, whose speech on Friday is as eagerly awaited as was Sir Samuel Hoare's. M. Laval is still, as we write, making desperate efforts to avoid committing France to the bold and honest course; and the danger referred to by "Critic," in his article written from behind the scenes in Geneva a day or two ago—of Abyssinia being manoeuvred by the Committee of Five and the Council into a scandalously false position—remains a real one; even though the Duce's intransigence has diminished it.

Mussolini's Gestures

The first reactions of Italy to Sir Samuel's speech have, of course, been unfavourable, and there seems little reason to hope for a change of heart and mind, especially if the League Council continues to sit and parley while Mussolini gets on with his work. During the last few days he has treated us to one or two new diplomatic and military gestures. On Sunday there was the reception of the new Italian Ambassador in Berlin by Herr Hitler, and an interchange of something that looked like more than the ordinary courtesies. At the moment we do not take this too seriously; Hitler was cautious, naturally enough, since it is hardly his game at the present stage to antagonise a more or less friendly British Government for the beautiful eyes of the Duce. Nor is it easy to see how Germany and Italy are going to come to an accommodation over Austria. A more spectacular stunt is the order for the calling out on parade, at the summons of church bells and sirens and drums, of all members of the Blackshirt organisations, men, women and children—the adults to stand to till midnight, the infants of the Balilla to go home to bed at 9 p.m. This may, perhaps, whip up a little extra enthusiasm for the glorious adventure of war. That it will be what the Fascists boast, "an object lesson

of national unity" which will stagger the world, we take leave to doubt. The real test of Italian unity, and of Italian strength, is yet to come; elaborate play-acting of this sort proves nothing except that Mussolini is a megalomaniac.

Labour and Sanctions

Mr. Lansbury fluttered the political dovecotes last week-end by offering to resign the leadership of the Parliamentary Labour Party on the ground that he is opposed to the policy, to which both the Party and the Trades Union Congress are committed, of sanctions against an aggressor. This objection, of course, is nothing new on Mr. Lansbury's part; he has never made any concealment of his Christian pacifist views. But, anomalous though it may be to have a leader at odds with his followers on so important an issue, the Party evidently does not want "G.L." to resign, and we do not think he is going to do so. No definite decision will in any case be taken before the Party Conference a few weeks hence. On quite other grounds, as appears from letters in our correspondence columns, the Socialist League and the I.L.P. are in opposition to the policy of the main body. They do not object to the use of force in any circumstances, but to the support, as they put it, of British Imperialism against Italian Imperialism. This in the present state of affairs is a doctrinaire attitude which we find it difficult to understand. It is not necessary to pretend that the National Government's policy is inspired by unalloyed idealism. But its present aim to check Fascist aggression, to defend and not to destroy, or even to exploit, Abyssinia, to avert a war in Africa that may easily lead to war in Europe. These are surely Socialist aims, and the Communists are wiser in their generation than the Socialist League and the I.L.P. in welcoming unimperialist behaviour by an Imperialist Power.

This King Business

Greece is now going to seek a remedy for its discontents and dissensions in a restoration of the monarchy. Recent disturbances in the capital and in the country, and the general Royalist pressure, have at last brought M. Tsaldaris down off the fence on which he has sat for some time, and he recommends the people to vote for a return to this "king business." It is all to be democratic, of course. The question is to be decided by a plebiscite within the next month or two, and when the king comes back he will be a "constitutional monarch." There is likely, however, to be a good deal of intimidation and coercion in the plebiscite, and popular forms in the Greece of to-day are not synonymous with genuine popular government. We do not suppose that ex-King George is cast for the role of an effective tyrant; he will more probably be the puppet of ambitious soldiers and politicians. And one must be an optimist indeed to believe that the rule of these men in the king's name instead of in that of the Republic is going to bring peace and prosperity to the Greek people.

Fascism in Finland

At the other end of Europe a less spectacular but perhaps more formidable movement of reaction is going on. Fascism is making rapid headway in Finland. There has recently been a great increase of German influence there, in the bourgeoisie generally, and particularly among the university students, and persecution and violence are in the ascendant to-day. The case of Toivo Antikainen is a significant incident in the struggle. Antikainen was the victorious "Red" leader who in 1922 was mainly instrumental in ending the White war of intervention. He was arrested some months ago in Helsingfors where he had come from Russia, and after a trial which, from the reports we have had of it, was a shocking travesty of justice, was condemned to imprisonment for life. The death penalty has been abolished in Finland, but its revival is one of the chief planks in the programme of the Right, and if they win at the next elections Antikainen and many others besides are likely to lose their lives. The Fascists openly declare that it is political and not criminal heads they are after, and they seem to have a judiciary to hand whose reactionary temper they can thoroughly rely upon. Antikainen's case is now filed for appeal, and it may prove to be a test case for Democracy in Finland.

Germany

Taking advantage of Abyssinian preoccupations the Nazi leaders have been indulging in ominous threats at the Nürnberg Party rally. If the "Triumph of Freedom" meant only the display of a fully-armed *Reichswehr* and a good many self-sufficiency boasts, the whole affair might not be incompatible with that triumph of moderation which the friends of the new Germany have so long foretold. But the emphasis is laid upon the sterner measures which are to be taken against the three main categories of anti-Nazis. These are catalogued as "Jewish Marxists," the *Zentrum* and the "stupidly reactionary bourgeoisie,"—by which are meant, roughly, Socialists or Communists, Christians and intellectuals. If State machinery fails to break the resistance of these terrible people, Party machinery will be called upon to do the job. In other words, the terrorist Gestapo and its ally, the extremist S.S., which is more prominent than ever at Nürnberg this year, are to do their worst. Meanwhile there are to be separate schools for Jews and half-Jews, though quarter-Jews are to be allowed to "pollute" the national schools of Germany.

Mr. Roosevelt's Prospects

President Roosevelt, a day or two before the murder of Senator Huey Long, made an opportunity for a fresh defence of the New Deal and announced an autumnal breathing spell. As he is starting on a wide speaking tour it is natural that he should strike a confident campaign note, affirming in particular the soundness and justice of his taxation programme. Its purpose was to "lay the burdens of government where they can best be carried." Mr. Roosevelt pointed out that the burden of public debt in the United States is still much below that of England; but he did not argue, as he might have done, that the new taxes will hardly begin to "soak the rich." If he had said this, his opponents would certainly have retorted that it is the principle of the thing they are fighting. The outlook for the President's tour is, on the whole, remarkably promising, and it is universally recognised that the removal of Huey Long from the field makes an enormous difference. The South is so completely dependent upon the Administration's agricultural and

relief policy that Long's successors, if there are any who carry weight, will not frighten the President. His big task will be in the great industrial centres of the Middle West. If, after the summer's record of Congress, he can win these back, he should be able to face the winter without undue anxiety. The announcement of the breathing space has been universally hailed as a friendly overture to the banking and business interests, and Mr. Roosevelt's more orthodox friends are therefore predicting a truce with Wall Street. And in the meantime the new National Labour Board and the Act regulating the coal industry have partially recovered for Mr. Roosevelt the support of Labour.

The Swiss Referendum

Voting on the Swiss referendum went heavily against the proposal to revise the Federal Constitution—the project being defeated by 501,000 votes to 194,000. The total vote cast last Sunday was very much smaller than at the crisis referendum held in June, when the Socialist proposal to add a new clause to the Constitution conferring upon the State special powers to deal with the crisis, secured 424,000 votes against 570,000. If this earlier vote showed the Socialists as unexpectedly strong, last Sunday's result demonstrates even more clearly the weakness of the extreme Right; for, though the proposal to revise the Constitution contained no specific proposals and was designed to catch votes from as many sources as possible, its principal sponsors were of the Right wing, and the Fascist groups were exceedingly active on its behalf. There is undoubtedly a strong case in Switzerland for constitutional revision, designed to give the Federal Government ampler economic powers; but until the Socialists can advance far enough to carry a proposal on the lines of their June "crisis amendment," nothing is likely to be done. The middle groups will vote down anything that savours of either Socialism or Fascism. But Switzerland seems at any rate to be safe from Fascism now for some time to come.

The Troubles in France

In France the difficulties of deflation increase. The strikes in the vine-growing districts have been spreading fast, and there have been serious clashes between the strikers and the *Gardes Mobiles* who have been drafted into the disturbed areas. The strikes arise out of the vine-growers' attempts to cut wages, on the ground that even the existing very low rates are too high in relation to the present wholesale price of wine. While they are contending with the workers over wages, they are waging war on another front against the Government, from which they are demanding special measures to raise agricultural prices. This cultivators' movement, which has delivered to M. Laval an ultimatum, due to expire next week, is also spreading fast over rural France. In effect, M. Laval is coming more and more up against the fundamental contradictions of his economic policy. He wants to cut wages, and dare not do this without trying to reduce retail prices. But he also wants to raise wholesale prices, not only for agricultural goods, but also for coal and certain other industrial products. This leads to a revolt among the traders, and the ill-success of his policy fails to placate the producers. Accordingly, more and more powerful forces are being arrayed against him; but these opponents of the Government are also busily fighting one another. How long M. Laval's policy will be able to survive we cannot guess; but it seems out of the question that it can offer any solution of France's economic troubles.

The Food of the People

Sir John Orr spoke out forcefully at the British Association about the problem of under-nourishment and agricultural policy. On the basis of an inquiry into actual food consumption by households at various levels of income, he reached the conclusion that definite under-nourishment, or deficient diet, existed up to a family income of about £1 per week *per head*. This would, of course, bring in practically the whole of the working classes through a large part of their lives. Sir John further estimated that an additional expenditure of about £100,000,000 a year would be needed merely to bring the entire population up to an adequate minimum standard of nutrition, and went on to double his estimate on the basis of making a really satisfactory diet available for all. He then suggested that the agricultural marketing schemes ought to be linked with the public health services, and given the definite objective of producing enough food to extend decent nutrition to the whole community. This he suggested should be done without reducing imports, by concentrating additional production on foods of high nutritive quality, such as milk, eggs, fruit and vegetables. He wanted the Marketing Boards to be reconstituted as public utility companies, with depots at which the poor could buy food at low prices, the State making up by a subsidy whatever might be needed to give the producer a remunerative price. Evidently, if Mr. Lloyd George wants to translate his scheme for settling half a million more workers on the land into practical terms, he had better join forces with Sir John Orr.

The Fall in Unemployment

There were 43,000 more persons at work in the last week of August than a month before, and the total number of registered unemployed fell below 1,950,000. This is a satisfactory sequel to the fall of previous months, which has brought down registered unemployment by 377,000, and increased employment by 370,000, since the beginning of the year. It should, however, be noted that the greater part of last month's improvement is due to better employment in coal-mining, which recorded a decrease of over 37,000 in the numbers out of work. No other trade showed any large movement, apart from ordinary seasonal variations. It is also noteworthy that the number of unemployed juveniles again increased—by 22,000 during the month—in consequence of the entry of a large batch of school-leavers into the labour market at the end of term. The urgency of raising the school-leaving age is thus again affirmed by the evidence of the figures. In general, the trend is satisfactory, and likely to remain so for some months, in the absence of external disturbances. The state of employment is, however, very dependent on the maintenance of housing activity at its present high level; and we have given more than once our reasons for doubting the continuance of the housing boom for much longer unless the State steps in with a big new scheme.

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A GENEVA DIARY

Geneva, Tuesday.

FOR the first hour or two on Monday morning the report that Huey Long had been assassinated quite eclipsed League gossip. How, everybody asked, would the event affect Mr. Roosevelt and the chances of the Presidency? After this diversion the famous whispering galleries of Geneva got down to their proper business and hummed until midnight in the Restaurant Bavaria, where journalists who have been whispering in corridors all day talk rather louder over their whiskey and soda. Rumour was naturally mainly concerned with the private doings of the Committee of Five, and by night some of the better informed journalists were convinced that Great Britain had put forward an actual proposal for an "international mandate"—whatever exactly that may mean. I have, however, the best authority for knowing that this was an intelligent anticipation rather than a fact. The truth is that the Committee approached the Italian Government to ask why it turned down the Paris proposals and what it would like better. The implication is, of course, that it is willing to offer them something more than the Paris proposals which were flatly turned down by Mussolini, though they went far beyond anything that could be justified by the Covenant, which makes the League Powers jointly responsible for preserving the political independence and integrity of all Member States.

* * *

There is now at least a possibility—and, I think, one must say a danger—that some such scheme involving probably a foreign "gendarmerie" mostly Italian, will be offered to Mussolini and accepted by him. For last month the Duce was convinced that he had nothing to fear from the League whatever he did. Three weeks ago he told a well-known American journalist that the League could do nothing to him, and pointed in proof to its behaviour in regard to Japan and to German rearmament. Lord Beaverbrook, I understand, told him in Rome that British opinion was against any sort of interference, and the Duce believed Lord Beaverbrook in preference to Mr. Eden, who warned him of the true state of feeling in England. To-day he must be disillusioned. Even Lord Beaverbrook has deserted the Duce. "Conciliation" is for the first time being tried with the ultimate threat of sanctions behind it. And to-day he may hope for terms that would mean victory. I say that I fear this, for it would surely be the worst thing that could happen. If France and Great Britain agree on terms with Mussolini, they can force the other members of the Committee of Five into agreement. (Incidentally, I am told on good authority that the Vatican has brought influence to bear on the Spanish Government to push Señor Madariaga, the Chairman of the Committee, into supporting proposals of this sort.) Then the Committee could force the rest of the Council into line and confront Abyssinia with these proposals as a League recommendation. Even if the Emperor could be bullied into acceptance, his chiefs would certainly refuse—if they did not cut his throat first—and we might even see the spectacle of Italy carrying out a punitive expedition into Abyssinia with the apparent approval of the League. That would indeed be peace (with Italy) at any price—at the price of war with unoffending Abyssinia, at the price of all honour and good faith, at the price of ending any genuine collective system in Europe and telling all dictators they could do as they please. Mr. Litvinov actually refused to serve on the Committee of Five because he foresaw this kind of manoeuvring, and was unwilling to be involved in any effort to force an unjustifiable settlement on Abyssinia. This disastrous outcome is, I say, a possibility. The safeguards against it, such as they are, are the strength of world opinion against Italy, the intransigence of Mussolini, and the fact that Mr. Eden has a reputation to lose and would, one hopes, refuse to go all the way in such a dirty deal.

* * *

The only obvious alternative is that the Committee of Conciliation will fail and that economic sanctions will be enforced when the Duce begins hostilities. It now seems certain that this will not be until the Assembly has dispersed. The rains in any case have been unusually heavy and much of the ground the Italian troops would have to cover will be swamp until October. There is apparently no hope of preventive sanctions under Articles X or XI. If, after hostilities have actually begun, Great Britain proposes economic sanctions, I have no doubt about the support of France and the other League Powers. Experienced League journalists tell me they have never seen such cohesion at Geneva before. Everyone is against Italy; Baron Aloisi met with not a shred of sympathy when he marched out of the Council last week, and Italy's arrogance has completely isolated her. The document demanding Ethiopia's expulsion, backed by data about Abyssinia's internal conditions and by pictures of atrocities (which could easily be countered by far worse illustrations from the record of Italian Fascism) merely disgusted everyone. The French will resist, but will follow a British lead. M. Laval himself said so a few days ago. In the last resort the French know that Great Britain is a better ally than Italy. A half promise from Great Britain is worth nine signed treaties with Italy!

* * *

When it comes down to brass tacks all the League Powers will co-operate in economic sanctions. The possible loopholes are Germany and the United States. Germany has, I understand, been approached by Great Britain and given some assurances. But it is thought that she is playing a double game and may also give assurances to Italy. The points to be remembered here are (a) that Italy cannot afford to pay for much and that even Germany will need payment; (b) that Germany can supply coal and perhaps a few other things that Italy wants, but not any large proportion of the hundred materials for war which the League Committee of thirteen experts recently enumerated as essential for a country making war; and (c) that Hitler is not at all ready for war himself, and is above all things now anxious to keep on good terms with Great Britain. As regards the United States, public opinion has been greatly misled about the meaning of the recent Neutrality Act. This Act was the result, very largely, of the Senatorial Commission on the Traffic in Arms which has led to a demand in the United States that never again should there be a trade in arms, or in contraband in general, which will involve the United States in disputes with belligerent countries. Therefore the new Act forbids the export of "arms, munitions and implements of war" to any country at war. This, coupled

with the statements of Roosevelt and the State Department that the United States would never put any obstacle in the way of an attempt by the League to enforce peace, means that if economic sanctions are applied the United States Government will not make a fuss should American citizens, sending contraband at their own risk, find it seized on the high seas. It may also mean that after a time popular feeling in the United States would lead to an actual refusal to allow American ships to carry those articles which the League declares to be contraband. But in any case it seems to mean that the United States would not help Italy.

* * *

I must add two conversations overheard in the lobbies.

Journalist A. "I'm told that even Baron Aloisi cannot talk frankly to Mussolini. He has been so long a dictator that he listens to no one—scarcely even to his generals."

Journalist B. "Yes, and the Italians here all look sick. They have discovered that public opinion really exists, and that it's all against them!!"

Journalist A. "That's true. *They have not an ally left to betray.*"

The second conversation runs:

X. "All the real business here is done in private rooms in the hotels where the delegations are staying."

Y. "That's why the British delegation is staying in the Beau Rivage. It has the largest bed-sitting rooms in Geneva—which illustrates the British genius for compromise."

CRITIC

CONDITIONS OF WARFARE IN ABYSSINIA

II

THE comparison with which I concluded my first article is, of course, ludicrously inadequate, but it will serve to illustrate the difficulties under which the Italians will have to work in Abyssinia. Their greater numbers will increase the difficulties beyond the possibility of computation. The climate will take heavy toll of them. Supply and transport will offer an almost insoluble problem and water will always menace their mobility. Should the Abyssinians keep to their traditional guerilla methods, there is no reason why the war should ever end, if Italy is set on subjugation. But if Abyssinia abandons her customary tactics and allows herself to engage her newly trained army in a pitched battle, she cannot hope to withstand the superior efficiency and skill of the invaders. Addis Ababa can be taken, or it can be bombed out of existence. It was taken by Mahomed Granye early in the sixteenth century with his mixed force of Somali and Galla. Magdala, it is true, was taken, but for reasons which do not operate to-day no effective resistance was offered, and yet we read of the incredible hardships undergone during the march.

From Mussolini's published statements, we can only assume that he desires, first to avenge Adowa by a decisive and spectacular victory, and secondly to conquer Abyssinia and hold it as an integral part of Italy's African Empire. He should have no serious difficulty in achieving the first part of his programme. The expenditure of life will be enormous, as he will have to traverse the Danakil deserts and advance up the valley of the Hawash. Straddling the railway, which he must do to cut off Abyssinian supplies from abroad, he will attack Diredawa and Harar, which will fall only after strenuous resistance, since Harar, the Emperor's home town, means far more emotionally to Abyssinia than does the capital, Addis Ababa. It is here that the Emperor's bodyguard—the regular army—will be engaged, and the chances are that few will survive. But the losses to Italy and to Italian prestige will have been totally disproportionate to the results achieved. With Addis Ababa, the railway and Harar in their hands they will only be at the beginning of the real war of conquest, and it is difficult to predict what their next move could be.

Obviously Abyssinia has to find an alternative route to the railway for the import of supplies and particularly of munitions. Several possible routes suggest themselves, all leading to British territory, and Italian action will be largely determined by this factor. They must, if possible, seal up all sources of supply, and where they are numerous, as they clearly are, they incur the grave danger of splitting up their forces and giving the Abyssinians an opening for which they will undoubtedly wait. The fall of Harar and Addis Ababa will certainly not break their determination to resist, and it will be for Italy to make the next move towards conquest. To invade Tigre and Amhara would be to court disaster. Their one hope after the initial victory is to leave a holding force in the north in order to keep the main body of the Abyssinian army out of action, and to attempt the real conquest of Abyssinia from the south, with Somaliland as their base.

Here they would be fighting over country in which the Abyssinians are not really at home. Instead of facing the regular army and a concentration of feudal troops, all of them well armed, the Italians would be confronted by the comparatively small armies of the local Governors, reinforced from the north no doubt; but in view of the ever-present threat from Eritrea, the Abyssinian Government could not unduly weaken its defences in the north by transferring large bodies of troops to the south. There would also be the tribal levies and the tribal armies, but as the greater number of these are not armed with rifles, and certainly not with modern rifles, their resistance, strenuous though it will be, cannot be as effective. The tribal levies, who have not the burning sense of patriotism and loyalty to the Empire to buoy them up, would be more readily disheartened by defeat: and the Abyssinians themselves are as susceptible as Europeans to tropical diseases when they come to the warmer climate of the south.

An adventure in the direction of Lake Tana may well be contemplated, if (as has been reported) Mussolini has decided to disregard British interests in that region, in which case the valley of the Abbai westward and north towards Gallabat along the Sudan frontier offers the Italians the easiest method of getting command of N.W. Abyssinia. The direct route towards Lake Tana offers obstacles too formidable to contemplate. Apart, however, from the possibility of embroiling Egypt and Great Britain, this diversion would have little military significance and could only be regarded as a political gesture which might in the end wreck whatever chance of ultimate success the Italians may have.

The mineral wealth and vast possibilities of Abyssinia lie to the south. As we have seen, the military organisation of Abyssinia is weakest in the south. The climate of the south is as inimical to the Abyssinians as to the Italians. Only the physical environment remains as formidable a barrier to conquest here as in the north. True, Somaliland is farther from the home base than Eritrea, and the conditions on the coast are even less healthy. The prospects are not alluring, but if a war of conquest is intended, then a campaign in the south offers far the best possibility of success, arduous, protracted and costly though it will be. I do not believe that, treason apart, any invader can ever conquer the highlands of Abyssinia proper, but a conquest of the south is possible, if a prodigal expenditure of lives and money is not in issue. Whatever course military operations may take in the north, the directing motive there will be prestige. The real conflict will come in the south, and the obvious line of attack is from the Juba river. Once the highlands of Bale and the Lake regions are secured, the south will be in Italian hands. But it will not be an easy row to hoe. Water is scarce between the Somaliland frontier and the highlands, and the tribes, ill-armed though they are, are magnificent fighters. The Abyssinians are well aware of the potential wealth stored in these southern provinces, and will fight bitterly to retain control. It may well be that the effort will be too great for the Italians, but taking all the factors into account, we may predict that the real struggle will not be at Addis Ababa, but in the rich and fertile territories of the

conquered provinces. Little as the southern tribesmen love the Abyssinians, who have not dealt too leniently with them, the arrogance of Italy's onslaught has driven them closer to Abyssinia. They have now a greater fear of European occupation and exploitation, and are completely at one with their overlords in resisting what they consider a common danger. All the south knows that the slave caravans pass through Italian territory, and rightly or wrongly, it is widely believed that the Italians are interested in the traffic. This belief, if nothing else, has given them the determination to resist at all costs.

J. H. DRIBERG

TRADE UNION POLICY

THE Trades Union Congress at Margate last week seemed for the most part more interested in the fate of Abyssinia and the League of Nations than in its own domestic affairs. Even if we leave out the debate on "sanctions," the keenest discussion turned, not on any question of relations between Trade Unions and employers, but on the celebrated "Black Circular," by means of which the General Council has been trying to undermine Communist influence in the Trade Unions. Apart from this issue, on which the platform achieved only a narrow victory, Congress went quietly on its way, passing most of the resolutions offered to it with little or no dissent. There were, indeed, some fireworks over the acceptance of knighthoods by the secretary, Sir Walter Citrine, and by Sir Arthur Pugh, who is also a member of the General Council; and there was a brief debate on the question of the "United Front" between the International Federation of Trade Unions and its "Red" rival, the Proprietors. But these discussions were somewhat perfunctory; and in general the Congress was an unexciting and uncontroversial affair.

The reason is, of course, to be found mainly in the economic situation of the Trade Unions and of Great Britain. Steadily since 1926—and indeed since 1921, except for a brief revival in 1924—the membership of the Unions has been going down. This year, for the first time, the tide turned, and Congress was able to record a small increase in members, with the promise of more to come, the advance having been accelerated since the returns for this year's meeting were made up. It is, however, still too soon for this turn of the tide to have produced much effect. Congress and its affiliated Unions remain for the most part on the defensive; anxious to avoid serious industrial conflicts if they can, hampered by the continued prevalence of unemployment, weakened by the shift of industry from old to new customs in which organisation is still weak, and, last but not least, led by a group of men who have got used to a defensive posture, and in whose minds militant Trade Union action calls up at once thoughts of the fiasco of 1926.

It is true that, in the course of last week, the Congress as a whole pledged its full support to the Miners' Federation, which, having taken its time to recuperate after the defeat of nine years ago, is coming forward once again with a national programme of demands for improved conditions. Congress voted in favour; but no one supposes that this means now what it meant in 1926. It is realised now, as it was not then, that a General Strike against a hostile Government cannot succeed unless it turns into a revolution. Congress will doubtless give the miners what help it can, short of ordering a strike on their behalf. But to how much does that amount in practice? Congress could not finance a miners' strike, even if it would. It cannot really do more than declare its goodwill, and give such aid as can be given by words, without doughty deeds to back them up.

Other Trade Unions besides the miners are beginning, in view of the gradual improvement in the economic situation, to ponder new national programmes, going beyond the restoration of the cuts made in 1931. But Congress shows little disposition to put itself at the head of a concerted movement, even for shorter hours, on which there would be the least obstacles to co-ordinated action. There were plenty of protests at Margate against the obstructive attitude of the British Government towards the proposed Forty Hours Week Convention; but no leader of influence proposed combined industrial action with the object of getting hours in Great Britain reduced.

Indeed, the general tone of this Congress maintained the caution of recent years. In the debate on the Depressed Areas, Mr. Bevin, as the Council's spokesman, made an offer to the Government that the Trade Unions would collaborate gladly if the Special Commissioners were given wider powers, accompanied by a sum of not less than £20,000,000 to be spent on projects for reviving economic activity in these districts. Probably Mr. Bevin had no expectation of this offer being accepted; but there is little doubt that, if it were, the present leadership would be ready to implement its offer.

It is a sufficient sign of the pacific and non-revolutionary temper of Congress that, in general, its proceedings have been warmly applauded in the Press. The *Times* has given it a fatherly pat on the back; and none of its habitual enemies have had any fault to find with it, save on the score of an excessive zeal to fight Italy on behalf of the League. As long as the present leadership holds—and there is little sign at present of impending change—the Trade Unions look like sticking to moderate courses, eschewing conflicts wherever they can, and leaving it to the Labour Party to make the anti-capitalist running, as far as it is to be made at all.

Largely, this is a matter of common practice; for most of the Unions are not strong enough to venture on bold policies until there has been a considerable further improvement in trade and employment. Moreover, even if trade and employment did so improve, Trade Unionism could not regain the strong position it held immediately after the war unless it were to succeed in organising far more effectively the workers in the newer industries and occupations. That it is beginning to do this—for example, in road transport and in the motor trades—is the most hopeful feature of the revival which has begun. But in these and other newer industries the Trade Unions have still a long way to go; and the great field of distribution remains almost wholly untilled. The clerks, outside the railways and the public services, are another vast and almost entirely unorganised group; and how many of the workers in the new factories along the Great West Road or in other rising industrial centres round London are yet enrolled in a Trade Union or capable of any sort of concerted action?

The Unions must capture these new territories if they are to regain their old power. But the trouble is that a prudently pacific attitude, so far from helping to bring in the needed recruits, positively stands in the way. Trade Unionism gains most members when it is most active; for then the reasons for joining a Union seem strongest. The problem for the Trade Unions to-day is, in reality, that of striking the right balance between militancy and prudence by launching as many forward movements as they can without becoming embroiled in a general conflict beyond their present strength.

The problem of the "Black Circular" is relevant here. The Communists have so persistently and without scruple vilified the Trade Union leaders that these have every excuse for being angry, and for accusing their critics of disruptive tactics. Nor is it surprising that, even if Moscow has lately changed its tune and told its satellites to work in reality for a "United Front" with the "social traitors" of yesterday, overtures should be received with scepticism. Nevertheless, it remains true both that Trade Unionism cannot afford to allow itself to be cloven into party factions and that the supporters of Communism include some of the best among the younger workers on behalf of Trade Unionism. Especially in the more backward areas and in the new industries the "rebel," who is apt to be forced in, or in association with, the Communist Party, is often the hardest worker for the Trade Union cause; and to bar him out with ignominy may

be to condemn a good many Trade Union branches to sterility, and some even to death.

It is, in addition, a vicious principle to admit political discrimination into Trade Union affairs; and the Union leaders might have dealt better with the Communists by giving them free rights of expression within the movement than by attempting to exclude them. Apparently the miners, railwaymen and engineers, as well as a number of smaller Trade Unions, share this opinion; and it is difficult to believe that, in face of the closeness of the division at Congress, the General Council will persist with its policy, especially if Moscow has made up its mind to work seriously for a "United Front" and to keep its own extremists in check.

It is no doubt true, as Sir Walter Citrine argued at Margate in opposing the "United Front" with the Profinterm, that united action means one thing in France, and quite another over here. For in France both political and industrial divisions had really split the working-class movement; whereas here there are no Communist Trade Unions, and the Communist Party has only an insignificant membership, especially outside the depressed areas. There is, as Sir Walter argued, no real basis for a "United Front" in Great Britain. But does not this situation exist precisely because up to the present the Trade Unions have not disfranchised or excluded these Communist members? How long will it last if the policy of the "Black Circular" is pressed to the logical conclusion—which is a split?

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to F. MacDermot.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

But for us to threaten Italy in defence of a primitive African State whose election to the League we vigorously opposed, and whose citizens could not even get into an English golf club, would be the most fatal blunder ever committed by a British Government.—G. Ward Price in *Daily Mail*.

Mr. William Green, of Market Harborough, is 90—and attributes his longevity and splendid health to eating live frogs. He catches them in the fields and swallows them whole. For 50 years he has been doing this on the advice of an Indian Fakir.—*News Chronicle*.

The thirty men and women who really do create the world's fashions are naturally much influenced by current events. Like the rest of us, they have been haunted by Abyssinia and so next season's clothes will remind us of war.—Jane Gordon in *News Chronicle*.

We can say without exaggeration that an attack by poisonous gas is another form of the effect of environment to secure the survival of the fittest and the elimination of decadent and unworthy persons and races.—*First Aid*.

Local cinemas do at times put up some high-class shows, almost worthy of being followed by the usual few bars of the National Anthem. Sometimes—it's not for me to say how often—some very questionable sex stuff is exhibited that by no manner of means should have the quasi blessing of the National Anthem played within one hundred miles of it. Is it not time that this incongruous cheapening of an anthem which is still sacred to millions is divorced from money making in any shape or form; before the tune and words are bereft of all their ancient meaning?—Yours truly, GOD, KING AND MAMMON. —From *The Evening Post*.

The value of the unemployed is more important than ages and numbers. In my opinion it requires two millions as a safety-valve to prevent strikes.—Letter in *Western Morning News*.

The "instructed" man *knows* that he is an Oedipus; he is Oedipus-conscious. Hence he fights fate with fore-knowledge. The conscious artist knows himherself child to Apollo, and hence can create beauty on hisher own terms. These notes will be continued.—*Sunday Referee* (Poets' Corner).

Wanted young girl lavatory attendant, genial work.—*Western Daily Press and Bristol Mirror*.

One question is exciting the Hampshire village of Ringwood. Is the earl coming home? There are two bodies of opinion—the Yesses and the Noes.—*Sunday Express*.

HUEY LONG, AND AFTER

THE killing of Senator Huey Long is a major political event, since it makes an important change in the anti-Roosevelt forces and transforms the outlook in the South upon which, almost certainly, the fate of the present Administration will depend. "The spirit of violence is un-American," the President declares. Mr. Roosevelt is the first and only American to have perceived this impressive truth; but it is curiously true that in the case of Huey Long, despite the spectacular body-guard which could not protect him, few were taking into account the possibility of murder. He was a gangster boss, employing every known agency of terrorism save the machine-gun. He was known to all America by his fantastic energy, his ribald humour, his continuous clowning. And the assumption was that he was personally safe. It was commonly taken for granted that nothing could prevent his presence, probably decisive, in the presidential contest of 1936. He was engaged in breaking the solid Democratic South, and if he had lived that is what he would have done. He has fallen at forty-two, the age of several dictators in the hour of their triumph.

Huey P. Long belonged to Louisiana and was wholly a product of the Missisippi Delta. He was a child of the Southern poor-white community, and there is truth in the statement of his henchman Governor Allen, that he was the greatest economic builder in Louisiana's history of 225 years. The Delta is indescribably backward and depressed. Huey Long believed that if he announced himself as the champion of the underdog, and made the right sort of promises in the vernacular, forty per cent. at least of a depressed electorate would vote for him, while the remainder would waste their energies in fighting one another. He was right. As Governor seven years ago he entered upon a spending policy such as the people of Louisiana had never known. He made thousands of miles of modern roads, bridged the rivers, and built causeways across the marshes. His folly was shown in a $5,000,000 capitol (where the assassin met him) at Baton Rouge; his common sense and humane feeling, in the building of hospitals and a modern medical college, in the provision of schools, the endowment of the State University and a lavish distribution of scholarships. He believed in free college education for all who wanted it. He scattered the State's revenue with a regal hand, well knowing that spending, both before and during the depression, was the only popular game. But while his appeal was to the whole body of the disinherited, he saw to it that public money was laid out for the benefit of the right people. Municipalities asserting their independence were wiped out. If the influential men in any district were against Huey Long, that district got no grants for roads or schools, while taxes were clamped upon recalcitrant individuals and corporations.

As Governor of Louisiana Huey Long created a machine of personal rule. He was not by any means the first State governor to do that; though none has moved so swiftly. But his peculiar success as dictator lay in this, that it was not until he was out of office that he attained the height of his power. The United States Senate still exercises its spell over the ambitious American politician, and Huey Long, in 1931, took his seat there, leaving a dummy governor in charge at home. Thereupon, with the added prestige of his Washington position, he proceeded to complete the structure of dictatorship in his State. He made his political machine all-powerful. He owned the legislature, the judiciary, and all the public services. There was not an office-holder in Louisiana—not a county or city official, not a

teacher or policeman—who was not in his pocket. He consolidated his power by due process of law, as determined by himself. He said that he could buy legislators like so many sacks of potatoes. On one occasion the State legislature passed forty-four of his Bills at a single sitting. The State militia was his guard, and his Cheka was a State bureau of criminal investigation. And all this, let it be noted, while Huey Long held no elective office of any kind in Louisiana. He furnished, that is to say, a surprising illustration of the maxim that in every country and province of our world a dictator's throne invites its occupant.

In Washington Huey Long was of no political consequence. He had no following in the Senate, where, after his vicious turning upon Roosevelt and the New Deal, he became a professional obstructionist and, during his last year, a farcical performer whose rising to speak was an unfailing signal to the galleries. It was, nevertheless, his membership of the Senate which made him a national figure. His call of "Share Our Wealth" (many of his followers and the press generally missed the clever appeal of the pronoun in the slogan as coined by Huey Long: they made it "Share the Wealth") would have made little impression if sounded from the Delta alone. Coming from the national capital as well as from New Orleans, backed up by the news-reel and by its author's effective radio technique, it gained for Huey Long a host of adherents, certainly not smaller than the pathetic crowd of elders who are marshalled under the banner of Dr. F. E. Townsend of California, with his pension of $200 a month for every citizen over sixty. Huey Long disclaimed all radicalism, but he insisted that the unbounded riches of America must be shared among the whole people. No personal fortunes over $3,000,000, or at least no annual incomes above the comfortable sum of $800,000, were to be allowed, and for the rest, the resources of America were ample for the allotment of $5,000 credit to every family for a home and $5,000 in an unencumbered money grant. The American family standard, said Huey Long, should comprise a freehold house, a car, and free college education. That was to be the real New Deal, as against the fraudulent Rooseveltian substitute; and in Louisiana, with 80 per cent. of 2,500,000 of a non-industrial population freed from direct taxation, and far across the Middle West, this plan of sharing has been taking on the hues of dawn.

The removal of Huey Long makes an extraordinary difference for Mr. Roosevelt in the coming campaign. A demagogue from the Delta could never be President, but he could divide the Democratic ranks and thus let in the Republican candidate. Mr. Roosevelt need have no fear of another rival in his own party; his ascendancy is now assured. Nevertheless, the "Share-Our-Wealth" movement is a portent which he cannot disregard. With the death of the regional dictator it is probable enough that the Long machine will be disintegrated; it is most improbable that any successor to the Kingfish can emerge. A second Huey Long, even in present-day America, would be a miracle. That, however, is a part only of the problem, a small part of Mr. Roosevelt's difficulty. The followers of Huey Long, with those of Dr. Townsend and of Father Coughlin, the radio priest, make a multitude of the exploited and despairing, who may be enticed by any slogan and led into almost any pit of darkness.

GOOD OPINION

THERE is something pathetic about the way in which nations long to have the good opinion of other nations. Nations do not so much mind what they do as whether they can do it and yet continue to seem noble, not only to themselves, but to the rest of the world. No nation is content to be a Jack Horner, who had nobody's good word except his own. Self-praise is sweet, but it falls short of perfect sweetness, till it has been endorsed by praise from others. Even Jack Horner, I am sure, would have been happier in his corner if his mother or nurse had come into the room and thrown up her hands in ecstatic appreciation of his virtue. To desire to be virtuous is common; to take the trouble to be virtuous is rare: the longing to seem virtuous to other people, however, is all but universal.

This struck me particularly during the week when I was listening to the night-concert from Stuttgart on the wireless. At the end of some songs by Beethoven and Mozart, an announcer broke in to tell us in English that we should now hear a conversation between an American professor (who had recently been travelling in Germany with a party of students) and a German. The German began by wishing the American professor well, hoping that he and his friends had enjoyed themselves, and suggesting that he should give listeners some impressions of what they had seen during their visit. The American professor declared that he and his friends wished to thank their German friends for the uniformly hospitable manner in which they had been welcomed; but the hospitality of the German people had always been famous. He and his friends had enjoyed every minute of their tour and had been especially interested in the cultural life of the people, as shown in their schools and universities. He thought these were wonderful, and he and his friends would go back to America and tell their friends how wonderful they were. The German obviously glowed with pleasure at this, but his cup of happiness had not yet been filled quite so full as he wished. Prodding the American professor into the utterance of further compliments, he declared that listeners would be greatly interested to know his opinion of modern Germany as a whole—of the new Germany and its spirit. The American professor nobly replied that it was wonderful, and that he and his young friends had been greatly struck by it. America and Germany had many close ties, and he and his friends would be able to go back to America and tell the American people all the wonderful things they had seen. And so forth. And so forth.

I do not pretend that this is an exact report of the American professor's talk, but you may take it from me that it was undiluted praise. If I had been a German, I should, after that talk, have regarded the American professor as a man sent down from Heaven to tell the world the truth about Germany exactly as I wished the world to see it. He was such a nice man. He did not so much as mention preventive custody—not even in order to commend it. A less tactful visitor might have said: "What we particularly liked among the cultural developments of your great nation was the system of preventive custody. We visited many of your concentration camps and were greatly struck, not only by their efficiency, but by their humanity. It is in accordance with the progressive spirit of the twentieth century that the great German nation, instead of meting out the old barbarous punishments to its enemies, should take all these measures to ensure their safety—not only feeding them at the expense of the State, but providing them with barbed wire fences to protect them from the attacks of vengeful mobs, and giving them Nazi guards to see that no harm befalls them." If the American professor had talked in this vein, he might have been suspected of irony; and irony spoils any compliment. The best thing to do as a rule when complimenting a nation is not to descend to details, but to confine yourself to fulsome generalities. "Wonderful," "marvellous," "glorious," "magnificent"—there are plenty of these adjectives in the dictionary, and they are the only adjectives that nations wish to hear applied to themselves by foreigners. You may always lay it on with a trowel. The only objection to the use of a trowel is that, in many cases, it is not a large enough implement for the purpose.

It is odd that nations should think that this mush of praise does them any good. Yet, perhaps, it is not so odd after all, since we depend as much for our self-confidence on praise in our individual lives as we do when organised into nations. The plain woman is said to feel beautiful when a kindly or cunning lover tells her that she is beautiful. A dull writer is doubly sure that he is a man of genius when he is told so, not only by himself but by an obliging friend. There are

cynics who discount any praise but their own; but the ordinary decent-minded human being loves to hear himself undeservedly praised as he loves a flattering photograph. What crook-lover was there who did not feel the better for being treated as an honest man? What coward has not felt an access of manhood on being complimented on his courage? The still small voice of Coué needs the amplifier of outside opinion in order to work its happiest effects. Many people think that the longing for the good opinion of others is rooted in self-interest. It may be so, but it seems to me that the pleasure of being well thought of is also a profoundly aesthetic pleasure. Aged and beautiful women have been known to revive under a compliment on their deathbeds.

Certainly, the ordinary patriot delights in praise of his country as in heavenly music. Let a foreigner attend a banquet as a guest, and how we applaud his speech if the compliments have been skilfully interwoven in sufficient numbers. Even the English, who are supposed to be indifferent to the opinion of foreigners—and Yorkshiremen who are supposed to be indifferent to the opinions of everybody outside Yorkshire—prefer the outsider who leaves them with the impression that they are fine fellows. At the beginning of the Great War Englishmen used to quote with relish a tribute alleged to have been paid to them by a departing German who said: "The trouble is, we shall never be gentlemen, while you will always be fools." The compliment, it is true, was a mixed one, but half a compliment is better than no praise. And, after all, who would not like to be called a fool, if the epithet implied that he was a simple honest above-board gentleman who always played the game and whose only fault was that he was so innocent that he could easily be taken advantage of by clever and unscrupulous foreigners?

Apart from the aesthetic value of good opinion, however, it is obviously believed to have a great publicity value. Otherwise, Germany and Russia would not be at such pains to spread a good opinion of themselves in foreign languages on the wireless. One would imagine that, for propaganda purposes, deeds would be more valuable than broadcast words; and that words over the air would produce little effect on listeners who knew that Jews were being persecuted in Germany and that in the timber-camps of Russia Kulaks were living in conditions rather unlike those that are supposed to be the right of free citizens. Each of these countries, however, seems convinced that it has only to picture itself as a kind of Utopia to the outside world in order to persuade the world that it is, if not Utopia, a country that is rapidly moving in that direction. Germany wishes to be applauded as the country that has saved Europe from Communism, and many Europeans would be grateful for being saved from Communism—at least, in its more oppressive forms. Even those who might approve of Germany's ends, however, find it difficult to compliment her on the means by which she is achieving them. There is no great virtue in freeing the world from Communism only in order to put persecution in its place. If I were the Minister of Propaganda in Germany, I would permit no speeches on modern Germany on the wireless, and would have none but musical programmes, in which great artists would perform the works of the great German composers, from Bach to Brahms. The best German propaganda is German music. Listening to it, we cannot but think of Germany as an agent, not of decivilisation, but of civilisation.

At the same time, stupidly misdirected as most national propaganda is, it seems to me not a bad thing that the nations of the world should be so sensitive to what other people think of them. Many of our good habits in private life are probably due to a desire to win the good opinion of other people. Those who are indifferent to public opinion are often also indifferent to cleanliness and the courteous manners that make human society agreeable. Fear of public opinion intimidates us into assuming a virtue though we have it not. Spiritually, this may be no great gain, but, socially, it is invaluable. And this obedience to public opinion may in time prove to be as invaluable in the society of nations as in our private intercourse. Italy may be a defiant Ishmaelite to-day, but even Italy would be less happy without the good opinion of the *Daily Mail*. If that continues to satisfy her, she must surely be the modestest or most irreclaimable nation in Europe. Y. Y.

SEX AND AESTHETICS

By the removal of Victorian sex taboos, and the popularisation of contraceptive practice, have we added to beauty and happiness, or subtracted from them? Are we nearer to the realisation of the dreams that stirred the libertarian poets and other idealists of the last century to revolt from, and to protest against, the sex crudities and smug grossnesses of their time? Is there, on the whole, more poetry and romance, or even more simple happiness, in sex relations to-day than when the less spiritual urges of the self-indulgent were catered for by emotionless professionals, offering their services for money; whilst the more sensitive attributed to sex union a spiritual and aesthetic significance that not only made easy for them physical self-control in the absence of love, but also made casual and loveless copulation seem gross and unthinkable?

Forty-five years ago, when I was nineteen years old, I wrote a pamphlet, which was published by that sturdy "freethinker" Mr. George Standring, advocating the spread of contraceptive knowledge among the people. I thought, as I still think, the whole thing rather disgusting; but I had a practical if contemptuous eye for obvious facts. Moreover, I thought the sex life and "sex rights" of the conventional married couples of my acquaintance so revolting that nothing could add to their ugliness. We live in a conditioned world—a world of compromise; and, to-day, outside the Roman Catholic Church, nearly everyone recognises the desirability, if not the necessity, of teaching people how they may by artificial means prevent pregnancy and the subsequent birth of a child from being the inevitable sequel of coitive intercourse.

Two books* on this subject, each in its way excellent, have lately been published. In *The Principles of Contraception*, Dr. Joan Malleson tells us in a straightforward concise way how conception may be prevented. Her book is primarily written for doctors, but non-professional readers will have little difficulty in following the practical advice which it embodies. She has had plenty of experience, and knows what she is talking about. Text and illustrations most efficiently serve the purpose for which they are intended. Unlike the books of some other popular writers on this subject, *The Principles of Contraception* is free from sentimental hogwash and maudlin verbiage. In other words, it is a good text-book. The other work is by a distinguished scientist, Dr. John Baker. He has contributed to what we may call contraceptive science more abundantly than any other of the few experimental chemists in this country who have touched the subject. The discovery of a really effective chemical contraceptive would constitute as near an ideal solution of the birth-control problem as is possible, whether regarded from an aesthetic or from a "practical" point of view. All scientists who are interested in contraceptive practice should read his important book; though for the average layman it is too technical to have much interest.

Opponents of contraceptive propaganda have always told us that its inevitable outcome would be wholesale promiscuity, or, at least, widespread heterogamy. Extra-marital coition is, in cultivated circles, no longer looked upon as a sin, or even, necessarily, as a *faux pas*. This change is, to my mind, all to the good; for the approval or disapproval of the law and its policemen can never turn an ugly thing into a beautiful one, or an unspiritual thing into a spiritual one. It is love and spontaneity, not marriage and custom, that make the difference.

* *The Principles of Contraception*, by Joan Malleson; Gollancz, 4s. 6d. *The Chemical Control of Conception*, by John R. Baker; Chapman and Hall, 15s.

But there is another criticism that has more reality in it. Spiritually and aesthetically, as well as eudaemonistically, many things lose much of their value if they are too easily obtainable. Motor cars and reduced railway fares have made England's beauty spots easy and cheap of access; with the result that many who formerly appreciated them now stay at home, rather than take part in their desecration. It is a little emotionally undermining to wake up on the cliffs at Gurnard's Head at dawn, and find oneself surrounded by broken beer bottles and empty Woodbine packets. Romance rarely attaches itself to commonplace acts, involving no difficulty, no risk and no restraint.

There is little enough romance in the life of the average man or woman:

> Love wakes men, once a lifetime each
> They lift their heavy heads and look;
> And, lo, what one sweet page can teach
> They read with joy, then shut the book.

Bearing in mind the truth embodied in the poem from which this verse is extracted (never mind about "once a lifetime"), it is not difficult to understand the reluctance of many sensitive people to standardise and mechanicalise the physical expression of sex love.

As I have already said, making things cheaper and safer does not always add to the spiritual and aesthetic happiness of mankind. Physiologically and hygienically considered, there is nothing about copulation that essentially distinguishes it from the satisfaction of any other appetite; and I can find no rational argument for discriminating between sex appetite and the rest of our biological urges. But I still feel that the tatouay misses something that we have, possibly through our social traditions and conventions, seemed to find in sex love, and in the moments of physical abandon which punctuate its course. Calculation, deliberation and mechanism still seem to me alien or even hostile accompaniments to this sacrament. I expect that we old stagers will have to accustom ourselves to doing without one more illusion. Doubtless we shall find fresh gods to worship and respect; and, anyway, asceticism gets easier as we grow older. It does, perhaps, seem rather a pity to have to scrap all those now becoming meaningless collections of words associated with the names of Shakespeare, Keats, Shelley, Blake and Yeats. But the objects and acts to which we attach sacredness and beauty change with the times; and I quite see that a newer generation may—without showing decadence—detach man-made abstract adhesions from the particular things hitherto thus garnished. Moreover, we shall get—possibly we are already getting—new poets more apt to the emotions and interests of twentieth-century men and women.

There is, however, one change in opinion and in practice of which I find it very hard to feel tolerant. In my young days, among the non-romantic respectable, copulation was a self-indulgent routine habit—"Have you not forgot to wind up the clock?"—as the lady asks in the first chapter of *Tristram Shandy*. To-day, I find it in intellectual circles commonly regarded as a hygienic exercise or as a tedious duty owed to one's pride. Non-existent biological impulses are aped in order to demonstrate virility. The theories of Freud, instead of being looked upon as the interesting scientific speculations they are, are taken as constituting a compendium of universal law and an inspired guide to conduct. There is no evidence to justify the widespread belief that voluntary sex continence leads to abnormal neurosis; or that therapeutic copulation is hygienically desirable—physically or psychically. It is a consciousness or fear of inferiority that lies behind most cases of morbid neurosis, and such sense of inferiority is generally due to the worship of false ideals and servitude to tawdry conventions of good form. Interestingly enough, it is in twentieth-century Bohemia that these conventions have their strongest hold. In such an atmosphere, love finds it difficult to breathe. If it is to have life and health, it demands not only freedom, but also self-forgetful spontaneity.

HARRY ROBERTS

Correspondence

LABOUR AND WAR

SIR,—Mr. Corbishley takes the Socialist and Trade Union movement to task for supporting League action against Italy. In effect he accuses them of falling into the old trap of believing that an impending war is "different" from all the past ones.

By implication, because the "poor little Belgiums" of the past have not proved to be the true tests of the conflicts in question, the "poor little Abyssinias" of the future must all be red herrings. There may be something to be said for this argument, but it seems a little hard upon victims of unjust aggression that they must not be assisted, because of past suspicions. It will be poor consolation to dying Abyssinians to know that they had received no protection because they may not be the "fundamental" cause of the war! It would be even less consolation to them if only they could read Mr. Corbishley's letter to the end and thus discover that he concludes by jettisoning the very argument he produces for letting them be killed.

Past wars having been clothed in hypocrisy does not, after all, invalidate all future wars; because Mr. Corbishley himself has one up his sleeve, the civil war, and this of course really will be different!—"and so *ad infinitum*."

PHILIP S. MUMFORD

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SIR,—I was interested in the letter from G. J. Corbishley which you printed last week. I should like to support the warning which he gives against the consequences of the present policy of the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress in connection with the Abyssinian crisis.

It goes without saying that every Socialist must oppose the Imperialist designs of Mussolini against Abyssinia and must support Abyssinia in its determination to defend its independence. But we must be very careful not to commit ourselves to support British Imperialism, which is opposed to the claims of Italian Imperialism but which has no more regard for the rights of Abyssinia than Mussolini himself.

The effect of the declarations by the Labour Party and the Trade Union Congress has been to give the impression that the working class movement is giving unqualified support to the National Government in its insistence that the hand of Italy shall be stayed if necessary by the application of League sanctions.

The National Government is not concerned in the rights of Abyssinia. It is concerned in British Capitalist and Imperialist interests there. It wishes to preserve control of Lake Tana, the head waters of the Blue Nile which irrigates the British-owned cotton fields of the Sudan and Egypt. It is anxious about the fortunes of the Bank of Abyssinia, a subsidiary of the Bank of Egypt, which is British. British Imperialist interests are vitally affected by the political control of Abyssinia because the Power which has such control will be able to dominate the southern exit of the Red Sea and thus the main line of communication with British possessions in East Africa, Asia and Australasia. There is also the fear in Imperialist circles that the real purpose of Mussolini is to establish a new Roman Empire along the East of the Mediterranean and in North-East Africa.

These are the motives which are leading the British Government to take a "strong" line at Geneva. The Liberal and Labour press is idealising Britain's action as championship of the liberty of a defenceless nation and the sanctity of international law. The history of the British Government's relations to Abyssinia, and even the recent consultations at Paris and the proceedings at Geneva itself, show that the British ruling class has no respect either for the rights of Abyssinia or the principles of international law. In 1906, the British Government signed a treaty with the Governments of Italy and France dividing Abyssinia into three spheres of influence among themselves. They did this without any consultation with Abyssinia, which proceeded to repudiate the treaty when its terms were made known. At Paris and Geneva the British and French Governments have proposed a settlement of the Abyssinian crisis by handing over the dominant economic and political control to Italy, with, of course, proper safeguards of their own Capitalist and Imperialist interests.

One result of the present crisis can be prophesied safely. Whether there is war or not, Abyssinia will lose its independence. If there is war, Abyssinia will still lose its independence whichever side is victorious. The real issue is not the independence of Abys-

sinia or the sanctity of the League Covenant, but the clash of interests between British and Italian Imperialism.

In pledging their support to the policy of the National Government under such circumstances, the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress are not in reality defending Abyssinia but are supporting the claims of British Capitalism and Imperialism. "Poor little Belgium" of 1914 become "Poor little Abyssinia" of 1935.

If the organised working class movement of this country and of Europe is really determined to assist Abyssinia and to resist Mussolini there is one direct course for it to take. Italy is obtaining 85 per cent. of its essential raw-materials and a large part of its supplies for war purposes from other countries. These supplies are being made, handled and transported by members of the organised working class movement in Britain, France, Poland, Belgium and other countries. Even Soviet Russia is supplying wheat and oil for the Italian army.

If the International Federation of Trade Unions, the Labour and Socialist International, and the Communist International, backed by their affiliated sections in the different countries, were to organise a refusal to make, handle, or transport goods necessary for the Italian war, it would be impossible for Mussolini to carry out his aggresssive designs.

This policy would not commit the working class to support the Imperialist intrigues of the Capitalist Governments. It would defend Abyssinia and defeat Italy. It would give the working class of all countries a new realisation of its power, and encourage it to go forward boldly in the struggle against Capitalism, Fascism, War and Reaction in every country. It would bring down Mussolini and the Fascist regime in Italy and the repercussions of this would spread to Germany.

Let no one say that this policy should not be tried because it may not succeed. It would be better for the working class to fail in the policy of the class struggle rather than to identify itself with Capitalist Governments in an Imperialist war.

Independent Labour Party, FENNER BROCKWAY,
35 St. Bride Street, E.C.4. Secretary

SIR,—The voting at the Trades Union Congress at Margate for the National Joint Council of Labour's Declaration on the International crisis has given the impression that the Trade Union Movement is overwhelmingly behind the application of sanctions against Italy by the National Government.

It was clear, however, to those who were present at the debate in Congress, that a large minority of the delegates were uneasy at the prospect of collaborating with the National Government in what was felt to be a war between conflicting imperialisms. The opposition was ineffective because it could see no clear-cut alternative to the General Council's policy.

The Declaration will have to be debated at the Labour Party Conference this October, and there the opposition is likely to be stronger and more coherent. Many delegates to the T.U.C. complained that they had no mandate to vote for the war which sanctions might bring in their train. Local Labour parties, however, have the opportunity to consider the practical implications of the policy accepted last year before reaffirming it.

It is in order that the Labour Movement shall be quite clear as to what is involved in its policy that the Socialist League is organising a series of anti-war conferences throughout the country on September 14th. The London conference will be addressed by Sir Stafford Cripps and the chair will be taken by Mr. E. Friend of the London Trades Council. If any of your readers are interested, they may gain admittance by applying at the door for visitors' tickets. The conference will be held at the Memorial Hall at 3 p.m. BARBARA BETTS

508 Endsleigh Court, W.C.1.

PEACEFUL CHANGE

SIR,—At a moment which calls, as few moments have done, for clear thinking, I would suggest that loose talk about sacrifices to be made by the countries which at present administer the countries of backward races, to satisfy Italy or Germany, is likely to create fog rather than clarity. We have seen this happen in the case of "collective security." That phrase has been continually brought up in recent years without any clear apprehension whether collective security was something which any nation belonging to the League of Nations could have to-day, so as not to require the armaments which it otherwise would in its own defence, or something which it should be the aim of a nation to bring about in a better state of the world not yet realised. At present vague, well-meaning talk about possible sacrifices which England could make in the colonial field to give all nations equal access to raw materials is the order of the day. I would submit that there should be much more concrete specification what such sacrifices could be. Is it, for instance, meant that England should transfer to Italian or German rule some of the African territory which is under British rule to-day? If it were simply a matter of territory, that would be simple enough, but since it would also be a matter of transferring masses of human beings for whose welfare we are responsible, it would be an action of very questionable merit. And if an Englishman may be taxed with self-righteousness should he think British rule superior to German or Italian, there is at any rate the obvious fact that Great Britain, France and Belgium are countries in which Labour has full freedom of speech and a certain influence in the colonial field, whereas this is not the case in Italy or Germany. But there is no need, it may be said, for the government of these countries to be transferred; it is only necessary that the people of all nations should have equal economic access to them. But this is already included in the terms of the mandates under which the old German colonies are administered. It would be a violation of the mandate if British merchants in Tanganyika were given any advantage over Italian or German merchants. I see indeed that Signor Gayda has asserted that the British have not observed the terms of the mandate. This is a grave charge, and, if substantiated in detail, would be something which the Labour Party might well strive to get corrected. Signor Gayda has, of course, shown in recent months a prolific faculty for fiction. With regard to the Crown Colonies held by Great Britain there is obviously pretty large opportunity for merchants of other nations, as one of your correspondents points out in your last number, to buy the materials they need. In Egypt before the war, when British control of the country was closer, German trade was actually going ahead more quickly than British. It may be said that in British Crown Colonies, although Italian and German merchants can buy raw materials, they cannot do so on equal terms with British. If this is so, here is something which might certainly be altered. At any rate, what is wanted is a precise determination of the disadvantages which to-day Italians or Germans can reasonably complain of in regard to the acquisition of colonial products. When the truth about that is ascertained, we shall know how to proceed in order to equalise opportunity, if any nation is really at an unfair disadvantage. But it is surely not an extravagant supposition that what Fascists and Nazis really desire is a territorial empire to gratify national pride, and that the demand for raw materials is largely a pretext. So far as that is the case, obviously no new arrangements confined to the economic sphere would satisfy them. Should Great Britain call together a world conference, as has been suggested, for arranging the distribution of tropical products equally, intimating that it was prepared to make sacrifices, and should it then appear that the sacrifice which Italy and Germany demanded was the cession of backward peoples to their rule, a sacrifice which our consciences forbade us to make, then the summoning of such a conference would not help the cause of peace, but rather the reverse. EDWYN BEVAN

The Athenaeum, S.W.1.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SIR,—Your article on a Hundred Years of Local Government is not quite up to date. The Local Government Act, 1933, by Sec. 294 empowers County Councils to pay the travelling expenses of members to the council meeting or to any committee, and I know that the Surrey County Council pays the expenses of co-opted or appointed members of committee once a month.

Urban and Rural District Councils were not constituted in 1888, but by the Local Government Act, 1894.

Limpsfield, Surrey. EDW. R. PEASE

THE CLAIMS OF SCIENCE

SIR,—When Mr. Watson contends that "there are numerous organisms, the problem of whose origin and mode of life remains beyond and outside any theory of purely mechanistic development," we may suppose that he refers to all theories with a physico-chemical basis, which do not demand a mysterious agent to explain an organism's development and mode of life. Such theories will range from the simplest sort of additive Mechanism, which in its logical extreme would explain the nature of an organism as the sum of the properties of the chemical elements of which it is

composed, to complex evolutionary Materialism. Though additive Mechanism is the theory which scientists have sometimes postulated, and have often allowed their opponents to hold against them, there are actually to be found in any scientific textbook conceptions of a far more complicated sort. Thus it is a commonplace that the chemical properties of a compound between two elements cannot be described as the sum of the properties of the elements themselves. Here is contained the simple idea of the organism without any mysterious reservations. If a solid is raised in temperature by a series of equal quantitative increments, at a certain point this change will be accompanied by a qualitative one, and a different physical body, a liquid, is produced. Here we have a principle—that of qualitative differentiation after a certain degree of quantitative addition—which can be used for dealing with organic evolution. The development of sterility between members of two branching lines from the same original stock might occur, for instance, by a gradual qualitative differentiation of their gene-complexes until the point when, in cross mating, the sex-factors of the one branch, in the gene-complex of the other, would be unable to produce a sexually harmonious organism.

That Mr. Watson is anxious to saddle mechanistic biology with a very naive additive Mechanism seems clear from his citing Köhler's Gestalt Theory in support of mystery in Biology. But Köhler is a very dangerous authority for Mr. Watson's purpose. Let us quote further from the very passage in Bertalanffy and Woodger from which his citation of Köhler's views appears to be taken :

> Köhler . . . begins with the assertion that the reactions in the organism do not proceed arbitrarily but are co-ordinated both in the healthy and diseased organism in accordance with the requirements of the whole. . . . That the parts behave in correlation with the whole is not, as Driesch believes, a fact inexplicable by natural science, but quite a general phenomenon. . . . This self-regulation of the organism is wonderful enough in its details, but, in principle, every connected system of the inorganic world in which the grouping of internal forces is directed towards equilibrium, behaves in the same way (Principle of Le Chatelier).

Though the laws of life sciences may well have their emphasis on aspects not directly concerned with physics and chemistry, though again the laws of biology may be more complicated than those of physics, I believe the postulation of agencies unacceptable to a materialist theory of evolution is a question of personal inclination rather than of logical necessity. H. COLLIER

6a, Pembroke Street, Cambridge.

THE O.T.C.

SIR,—With reference to your recent statement, and the letter in your correspondence columns on the subject of the public school O.T.C., may I cite the facts of my own case ?

At Rugby, new boys were not required to join the O.T.C. immediately upon entering the school ; during my first months, therefore, I had time to discover the facts of the case, and consider them. On anti-militaristic and other grounds I eventually decided that I should attempt the apparently unusual course of not joining the corps, although all my contemporaries were proposing so to do without question. Despite the fact that the O.T.C. was invariably understood and stated to be voluntary, my attitude met with great disapproval, especially from my house-master (a clergyman). In the course of an extremely unpleasant interview with him, I was told that, if I did not join, he (my house-master) would " refuse to take any further interest in me."

As I persisted in my refusal, however, he wrote to my father, then and now an ardent Territorial officer, asking whether there were any grounds for supposing that I should not join the corps. Receiving, somewhat naturally, an answer in the negative, I was told that I was to join the O.T.C. as my parents wished it. This, in due course, I had to do. A. F. RAWDON-SMITH

59 Bateman Street, Cambridge.

SIR,—The Marlborough O.T.C. that has so infuriated your correspondent and his fellow Marlburian, Mr. Beverley Nichols, must be strangely different from most. My own experience at Highgate from 1924–30 was that the corps was more popular than otherwise ; for although membership was in no way compulsory, several houses could boast at the end of this period of having all eligible boys, i.e., fourteen and over, in the corps. Nor was this due in any way to a post-war " hang-over " of militarism, since numbers tended to increase rather than the reverse. It can be explained partly by the fact of the institution's being taken virtually for granted, and partly by certain privileges which were granted to its members. Certainly, the O.T.C. was regarded as " a fag " ; but less so, as a rule, than most other brands of work.

The melancholy truth is that, however much one may respect pacific scruples in young men, in schoolboys they have seldom any end but the avoidance of a little hardship. Mr. Nichols, for instance, has confessed that he found Rugby football " painful and bothersome " ; which automatically renders his opinion of the O.T.C.'s activities unworthy of consideration at all.

Cliff Coombe, Broadstairs. B. A. YOUNG

" FROZEN DEEP "

SIR,—Can anyone, I wonder, tell me if there still exists Wilkie Collins's *Frozen Deep* in drama form ? He wrote the play in 1856, and it was produced the following year. Dickens, Mark Lemon and Augustus Egg, R.A., took part, as well as Wilkie Collins himself, and several performances were given later—one before Queen Victoria at her request. The narrative form of the story is, of course, well known, but so far we have been unable to trace the play.

The Croydon Players, of which I am Hon. Treasurer, would like to consider a revival if, on examination, the work should prove suitable. Any information that can be given will be welcomed.

24 Haling Park Road, G. PERCY HARRIS
South Croydon.

THE SALZBURG FESTIVAL

SIR,—Will you allow me to make some criticism of J. G.'s article on the Salzburg Festival ?

To begin with, he surely over-estimates the musical importance of Mozart's Serenades, and Dr. Paumgartner's work in that sphere. They are delightful works, but do not deserve mention side by side with the piano concertos and Schubel's work for them, especially if it be to exclude any allusion to the concerts and operas conducted by Toscanini at the Festival.

I fear that J. G. is very anti-Italian and will therefore ignore not only Verdi's masterpiece, *Falstaff*, but any other work touched by the Italian exile.

My main objections to the article in question are the anti-Italian implications, especially as they appear in the criticism of *Don Giovanni*. " Austria," I read, " is now, in everything but name, an Italian protectorate, and for this opera the cast consisted largely of Italian singers. Their singing was pretentious, the general effect a mongrel misfit." This is misleading. I have the programmes for the first two performances before me as I write. Four only out of the eight parts were sung by Italians. Of all the eight only one was outstandingly good—Ezio Pinza, protagonist. The performance was certainly not up to Salzburg standards, illness being partly the cause ; but the real blame for an inadequate performance should, in my humble opinion, be saddled upon the producer, Karl Heinz Martin. For example, apart from nodding his head the Statue never moves, that heavy tread which Mozart's music indicates is left entirely to the imagination, and the fatal grip of the hand is also missed, for the statue from the neck downwards was never anything but plaster. The producer has also caught the modern passion for steps, so that whether we were inside or outside the Don's house we were faced by a long flight up to the front door. The grouping of the singers, too, was often poor. Bruno Walter's conducting, consequently, never had a chance, but Ezio Pinza and possibly Lazzari (as Leporello) were the only two that gave him any real help in his efforts to save the production from failure. In any case, is it not ridiculous to complain, even implicitly, of Italian influence in the performance of a work with Italian libretto and written by a composer who was undoubtedly influenced by Italy himself ?

Vienna has greatly suffered, *not* from the freedom of musical exchanges with Italy, but from the restriction on German (that is Nordic) artists crossing the Austrian frontier. Musicians from Austria tell us that performances at the Staatsoper are not what they used to be, and yet I read with surprise that " a singer who is only very promising goes to Vienna and, after two years in that school, is a real artist." If this is not a palpable exaggeration, then too often we hear some of their artists before the two years are finished.

Some months ago in a criticism of the Florence Festival in one of our music journals, I spoke of the Free Trade policy which Italy has adopted in music. The Vienna production of *Seraglio*, the 1st and 9th Symphonies, etc., were truly excellent as given in

Florence by the Austrian visitors. But after hearing *Falstaff* in Salzburg I can say that it has been a fair exchange.

In Rome this year a foreigner (and, I think, an Austrian) sang the part of Princess Lurandof, and sang it very badly (she also sang—even worse—the part of Donna Anna in the Rome *Don Giovanni*). Of such performances, the least said soonest forgotten. If we criticise let us do so reasoningly and upon some sound basis. Neither Italy nor Austria has any plot afoot to "deflect" the music of the other. Need I add that there is no "cultural agreement between Austria and Italy to destroy the Vienna opera"?

Wayside, Hale, Cheshire. HARRY BEARD

SEA-LEVEL

SIR,—In your humorous column in the number for August 24th, I notice a quotation from a letter in the *Daily Mail* which asks a question about sea-level in connection with building in England. Possibly the quotation is given for some peculiarity in wording, but the query is sound. In building operations, when existing levels are appreciably disturbed, the architect has to "reduce" his new land levels to Ordnance Survey levels as indicated by the nearest "Bench-mark," the datum for these being mean tide-level of Liverpool. A. COLLIER JAMES

12 Ashbourne Road, Derby.

Miscellany

CAUCASIAN NOTES

I. THE ARTS

ONE of the proudest boasts of the Soviet Government is that it has restored to the national minorities the liberty of their own cultures. Since the Revolution, it is claimed, the peoples of the various republics and autonomous regions—the Ukrainians, the Uzbeks, the Armenians, the Georgians, and a host of others—have not only been able to use their own language officially, and to establish their own schools and their own newspapers in a way that was unthinkable in the Tsarist Russian Empire, but have also been able to develop the arts with the greatest freedom, according to their own national traditions and temperament.

In a recent visit of some weeks to Tiflis, the old capital of Georgia and the modern capital of the Transcaucasian Federation, it seemed to me that it would be impossible for a foreigner to judge, completely and fairly, how far this boast is justified, unless he could speak at least a dozen of the hundred and fifty languages which are current in the Soviet Union. Being able to speak no Georgian, and only very little Russian, I clearly have no claim to be this ideal foreigner. Nevertheless I do claim, by dint of a great deal of discussion with Georgian writers, actors, régisseurs and painters, in some language which both sides could speak, and by persuading one or other of them to act as interpreter for me in frequent visits to their plays and ballets and cinemas, to have obtained some idea of cultural developments, fairly just in its main outlines.

One thing became evident from the very start. The idea that nothing can be published or produced in the Union unless it is explicit propaganda, is completely false. It may have been true once upon a time, but it certainly isn't now. The veto on jazz as bourgeois has disappeared, and the new Leningrad jazz orchestra, touring Transcaucasia, was as rapturously received as René Clair's *Sous les toits de Paris*, which had also just arrived. One of the older generation of writers, Djavachisvili, who openly lamented the fact that the traditional Caucasian costumes were disappearing from the streets, to be replaced by modern Moscow fashions, did not seem to be troubled by any corresponding change of taste in literature. His novels, highly thought of on all sides and running into large editions, were purely Georgian, historical, and according to his own description, devoid of any obvious Marxist moral. He held, at the same time, a not unimportant post in the Government. His case was not the only one. The Georgians have always valued lyric poetry very highly, and proudly remind foreigners that their greatest poet, Rustaveli, flourished at a time when the Russians had scarcely emerged from primitive barbarism. Not only are they continually studying and re-editing their classics, but they are still writing a great deal of poetry; poets abound, particularly, as might be expected in a land where the relations between town and countryside are so close, poets of country life. Many of them have chosen to write of the collective farms and Socialist advance in remote Caucasian regions, the two most significant developments of recent years in the life surrounding them. But at the same time a number of distinguished poets, such as Jashvili, a peasant's son, and Kaladze, a proletarian, continue to write on purely lyric themes, spring and their mistress's eyebrow, and are not by any means looked down on for it. I was struck by the number of poets writing, by the amount of money they seemed to earn—anything between 100 and 500 roubles for a single poem in a newspaper—and also by the ease with which anyone of any talent whatsoever seemed to get published. In fact with all the factory and club and farm newspapers, it is practically impossible to avoid being encouraged and becoming known.

The rise of the collective farms has also led to a most interesting revival of the figure of the wandering minstrel and poet. Some of these poets have made themselves famous over a very wide district, and are eagerly welcomed at the farm gatherings. Articles appeared in the Tiflis press, while I was there, about their wanderings and their repertoires, which include not only old traditional songs, but also stories and legends of the civil war and the new social life which the collective farms are creating in the countryside. Thus the Revolution has opened up new paths for Caucasian poetry, without violently breaking the literary tradition.

Scenes of collective and state farm life had also become a favourite theme among the artists, and some of the most successful pictures in the annual exhibition which I saw had their setting in the tea-plantations and the vineyards. Of all the arts in the Soviet Union, easel-painting (as distinguished from theatrical *décor*, which is often first-class), makes an impression of the least vigour, and though the Georgians showed, I thought, a more vivid sense of rhythm and colour as a whole than most Russian artists, there was nothing in the exhibition that could be called genius or even brilliant talent. It was interesting to see that the influence of Pirosmanishvili, the "Henri Rousseau of Georgia" was still prevalent.

The life of the wilder tribes of the mountains, and their opposition to, or development in the new civilisation are the main themes of the films made by the special Georgian film trust, Goskinprom, but as yet their value is more ethnological and educative than aesthetic. In the theatre, as in Moscow, the classics are immensely popular, Shakespeare, Goethe and Schiller, as well as the Russians and their own pre-revolutionary dramatists, and though adaptations are often made, it is more to suit the artistic schemes of the régisseur than the Communist Party line. It was from the Georgian theatre that I got my most definite impression of something developing with its own strong racial and local colour.

There are two theatres in Tiflis which are specifically Georgian; the more famous is the Rustaveli Theatre, under the direction of Sandro Achmeteli. This régisseur has created a remarkable style of presentation, in which movement, gesture, intonation are emphasised, to give a strongly rhythmic, at times almost ballet-like effect. It is clear that such a style is particularly appropriate in heroic and revolutionary plays. The two most striking successes of the theatre, in fact, have been the productions of Schiller's *Die Raüber*, adapted and renamed *In Tyranos*, and *Anzor*, a translation to Caucasian conditions of Ivanov's play of the civil war, *The Armoured Train*. Anzor is an imaginary heroic figure who joins the Bolsheviks—a sort of Chapayev of the mountains—and the play shows the struggle of the Caucasian peoples under his leadership against the attacking Whites. Achmeteli's technique suits the freedom and vigour of the mountain life, and the

revolutionary moment, to perfection; there are magnificent scenes with songs and dances, and the whole production makes a deep and moving impression. Essentially Georgian, it is not in the least "provincial."

This technique has, naturally, its drawbacks. It is not every day that the Georgian audience wants to see heroic drama, and in treating psychological or more everyday themes the Rustaveli Theatre is often hampered by a style that has become almost a rigid habit. It is here that the Marjhanoff Theatre comes in. Marjhanoff, under whom Achmeteli studied, died some years ago, but the theatre has been carried on in the spirit of his art, and has recently enlisted the services of a highly gifted young régisseur, Vassili Kouchitashvili, a Georgian who worked for some time after the war in Paris and in America. The art of the Marjhanoff Theatre has a less obvious appeal, but is rich in variety and subtlety. I was lucky enough to see two productions there which admirably illustrated the range and methods of the theatre, a comedy of old Georgia, *The Eclipse in Tiflis*, and Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe*. In the first of these the adaptation, I gathered, had been fairly free, but it remained pure comedy without any trace of propaganda grafted on. Every point was given just its right emphasis, and the subtlety with which humour and music and poetry were blended, the beauty of the grouping and the *décor*, were completely satisfying.

The same essential grace of production, with music as a vital part of the pattern, was evident in *Kabale und Liebe*. Without any wish to minimise the artistic importance of the Rustaveli Theatre, it seemed to me that the methods of the Marjhanoff Theatre yielded richer results; the former is inclined to impose its own fixed style on everything it stages, while the latter seeks out the heart of each author's, each play's meaning, and develops its production from that centre. One thing, not characteristic only of Tiflis, but of any theatre in the Soviet Union, is not easy to forget: the intense absorption of the audience in *Kabale und Liebe*, and their passionate reactions to each turn of fortune, in a way that may seem almost naïve to a Westerner, yet was, at the same time, immensely refreshing.

JOHN LEHMANN

TO A BELIEVER

If, after death, events should prove me wrong
And some astonished spirit quit my bones
To seek that heaven which I thought to find
No other where but in your simple mind,
More subtle pain than Satan's fiery prong
Will be employed to stimulate my groans;
My hell, your heaven, will be the self-same place,
As wagging a smug finger in my face,
You'll say, "So I was right, dear, all along."

But if I'm right in what I think I know
There'll be no coming back to tell you so.

GEOFFREY PARSONS

THE ENGLISH FIRE-RITUAL

A SUMMER evening, at any English seaside town. It is the "violet hour,"

> . . . the evening hour that strives
> Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea,
> The typist home at teatime. . . .

and (for it is Regatta Night) brings townsman and tripper, Sweeney and Mrs. Porter, hurrying to the seafront. The Marine Parade is crowded, already, beneath its intricate festoons of amber lights. A military band plays *The Gondoliers*. The awaited moment draws near. In the shadow of the pier, men are already moving to and fro with lighted tapers. The dusk thickens between the wide-flung chains of lamps. Children, kept from bed for the great occasion, grow fretful, and in the propitious atmosphere of mass-anticipation, new-met lovers grow bold. Hands close on acquiescent hands. . . . And suddenly, a dull thud, half-muffled by the murmur of the waves and the brassy clamour of the band, projects skywards a soaring yellow star. A thousand eyes sweep upwards, like a moon-drawn tide. A dazzling flash, and an ear-splitting explosion. . . . A thousand pent breaths are exhaled. A ripple of nervous laughter sweeps the close-packed crowd.

The fireworks have begun.

* * *

Pyrotechny is a neglected art. Happily, perhaps: for, in a sophisticated age, when our public shows tend to become more and more mechanised and synthetic, pyrotechny, almost alone, retains its mystery and its traditional excitement. You cannot broadcast a firework-display. And among all the people who can explain to you the workings of a magneto or a radio-gramophone, how many could describe the intricate construction of a whistling rocket or a roman-candle?

Fireworks have dwindled into symbols of slick virtuosity and ostentatious brilliance. But if the fireworks were only nominally responsible for Handel's *divertimenti*, we must at least recognise in them the direct inspiration of Whistler's Cremorne Nocturnes, and Debussy's prelude, *Feux d'artifice*.

Fireworks happen. We take them for granted. They flower, mysteriously, in the darkness, and nobody bothers to ask how or why. Nobody is interested in the perilous careers of those who make or ignite them. The private lives of Mr. Brock and Mr. Pain have no news-value. Yet still we flock, in our thousands, to witness this strange Ritual of Fire, this barbaric propitiation of goodness knows what primitive Deity.

From about the middle of October, the windows of the toy-shops and (inexplicably, but inevitably) the ironmongers' and bicycle shops are filled with dummy replicas of the ritual instruments. With their shining and starry paper wrappings, these *natures mortes* of rockets and Bengal lights have a genuine air of conforming to a gay old tradition; their "fancy" patterning reminds one of old-fashioned Christmas-cards and the designs painted on swing-boats and roundabouts. They seem to date, most of these gay patterns, from the mid-nineteenth century. Firework manufacturers are conservative. They are also sublimely wasteful. For what remains, after the great day, of all these brave trappings? Brief candles they are indeed; for, of all these elaborate devices, mysteriously and capriciously named—Devils-among-the-tailors, Bouquets of Gerbs, Mines of Serpents (why "mines"?)—only a few charred scraps will survive, scattered upon the sacrificial lawn.

If Guy Fawkes had not existed, it would have been necessary to invent him. It is, however, to be regretted that the Popish conspirators did not choose July rather than November for their operations. (The French, if less serious in this matter than ourselves, are more sensible; they let off their fireworks, for the most part, in the middle of July.) But the truth is, that fireworks satisfy a profound need in Englishmen; and the fact that, by a historical chance, we risk pneumonia once a year for the sake of this all-important rite, will not deter us from its just and proper celebration.

Fire as a source of magic is, of course, a universal concept among primitive tribes. Rites and ceremonies in connection with fire are innumerable, and belong to every age. There are even certain psychopaths, to-day, whose sole pleasure consists in some form of arson. The Chinese, as everybody knows, still frighten away evil spirits by letting off crackers. But it is in England, more than in any other civilised country, that the firework-cult most strongly survives. In this, as in other respects, we are plainly more atavistic than our neighbours.

Fireworks, of course, also help to satisfy what Mr. Huxley has called our periodical need for orgies. Mr. Huxley cites war as one of the most potent of these satisfactions. It seems a pity that the people whose orgiastic requirements are apparently satisfied by the machine-gun and the trench-mortar, cannot be persuaded to substitute for these dangerous (but not more childish) toys, the charming roman-candle and the

innocuous squib. If only Messrs. Schneider-Creusot and Skoda would confine themselves to the mass-production of catherine-wheels!

* * *

Beneath the pier, the last roman-candle has fired its ultimate volley of rubies and emeralds. The final flight of rockets has soared starwards, and flung its fabulous streamers across the upper air: a Lisztian cadenza of silvery and iridescent flame. A crackle of quickmatch: the King and Queen are outlined, somewhat jerkily, in fire—a charming anachronism in the age of electricity. The band plays the National Anthem. The crowd cheers. The Royal Features slowly and smokily disintegrate. The King's beard is fading; the nose of the Queen has been spirited away, as though by the blackbird in the Nursery Rhyme. Cassiopeia and the Bear shine down again, unrivalled, upon the homing multitude.

The fireworks are over. JOCELYN BROOKE

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Stop . . . Go!"

The new Charlot revue at the Vaudeville is everything that a revue can be without imagination. The girls are gay, the tunes brisk, the spicy joke is followed by the saccharine song, and a general verdict of "damn good show" is what one expects and hears in the corridor. As a stock production, built on recipe, *Stop . . . Go!* succeeds. In Mr. Douglas Byng the company has an excellent comedian who bounces through a number of parts, male and female, high and low; he is best, perhaps, as the down-trodden middle-aged man, or singing archly of old days in Gomorrah as a salified Mrs. Lot. Apart from Mr. Byng, the revue lacks character. There were only two moments in the evening when our imagination was, very gently, prodded: once when the chorus, jazzing with dummies, was succeeded by a pair of dancers who mimed the same limp attitudes; and again a ballet of masks in which the heavy faces of well-known people nodded solemnly on top of a dainty corsage. Both these effects have been made before on the stage in more vivid form.

The Borgias at Swiss Cottage

As our period scrutinises the accepted heroes in the hope of discovering a fault, so we can hardly refrain from devil's advocacy in the case of the legendary fiends. In a conventional volume of The Great Sinners, the Borgias would have plenty of space; Mr. Clifford Bax, therefore, in his play *The House of Borgia*, now at the Embassy, sprays these gaudy ruffians, if not with white-wash, at least with a pale coat of modern thought, reflecting that Cesare's naughtiness must have had some psychological dis-integration to excuse it. Frustrated sister-love? Incest is not a subject to which the public taste or the official regimen of our theatre permits frank discussion, and so Mr. Bax's main point can only be vaguely raised and never logically resolved. Mr. Bax has found nothing to say about Lucrezia except that she was a good wife and gave her unfortunate brother no encouragement. There is far more gusto in the picture of Pope (and papa) Alexander, always a trifle shocked at his son Cesare's notion of the next step in liquidating the opposition and always taking that step at last with a good heart and a warm chuckle. Mr. Russell Thorndike's performance of this old rogue is very English; he is like some pastoral scamp who might be discovered with a pipe, a pint, and a rusty bowler hat. Mr. Thorndike brings vigour to the play, which it essentially needs. Some of the acting is too slow and genteel and Mr. Fernald's production lacks emphasis. To say the best of the Borgias is, no doubt, an act of chivalry, but the pleading here is not theatrically effective. Stronger casting would have helped; but what author or producer ever gets the cast he wants? A first-rate play stands up to a second-rate production.

Katharine Hepburn

Those who like their films served hot with a lump of sugar must find the acting of Katharine Hepburn a continual irritant. After the numerous pictures in which she has appeared, she still has none of the polish which Hollywood players, particularly those in the Paramount studios, usually acquire. If she were content to act in the normal manner, no doubt she could disguise the flaws in her technique; but she will go further: she has some gifts which no other actress on the screen, except one now who imitates her, possesses, and she will not keep from using them. Her naive, transparent enthusiasm is perhaps the greatest of these. It can lead her to the heights, but it may at any moment drag her to the profoundest depths. It set the seal of perfection on her scene with Aubrey Smith at the beginning of *Morning Glory*, but it embarrassed everybody in the Shakespearean scenes which followed. This perpetual trapeze act, performed without a net, will possibly in time damage Miss Hepburn's reputation with the great film public. Like Gulliver, they do not like the arrows of Lilliput to pierce their hide: Miss Hepburn's best and her worst both penetrate, and make them squirm. In *Break of Hearts* there are no fiascos, though there are several shaky moments. Perhaps the finished and steady excellence of M. Charles Boyer was a sheet anchor. He gives a remarkably good performance as a conductor with the world at his feet, who has let down his line into the sea of love and finds that this time, instead of the usual minnow, he has caught a whale which is too big for any landing net and can do with him what it will. It is a pity that the story was written so that the third form would have no difficulty with it, because the actors have so much more to give if there were any occasion. Still Miss Hepburn is able to convince us that "the great Roberti," even though no one troubled to explain the principles of conducting to Charles Boyer, can "do things to music which no man has ever done": and to do that requires great gifts. Jean Hersholt is as good as usual as a professor of music and general confidant; and in the same programme is one of the best Pop-eye cartoons ever made.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, September 13th—
National Rose Society's Show. Horticultural Hall.
The Harlot. Arts.
SUNDAY, September 15th—
Joseph McCabe on "Changing Human Nature," Conway Hall, 11.
TUESDAY, September 17th—
Nina. Criterion.
WEDNESDAY, September 18th—
Karl and Anna. Gate.
THURSDAY, September 19th—
Please, Teacher. Hippodrome.

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ARTHUR BARKER

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THERE is a cult for Charles Lamb, so that if one is not a true Elian, it needs some courage to write of him at all. Yet perhaps there is no one from whom one can get more enjoyment if one is allowed to like him half-heartedly. When I read one essay, or two essays, I am delighted, but to read a third, on top of them, bores me. There is something propitiatory about Lamb's waggish gentleness; he wants us to laugh so that we shall not be too severe upon him. Like many jokers, he cannot face the truth; he escapes from his subject with a pun. He lacks the courage and the serious conviction to be dull. How unlike and inferior in this respect he is to his great friends Wordsworth and Coleridge, and even to Hazlitt and de Quincey, who are in earnest and can prose away to their hearts' content. Coleridge can be unspeakably boring, Wordsworth unimaginably flat; but they are *great men* and we always feel respect. I never feel that Lamb is great; he is merely one that has kept company with the great and has been licensed to amuse them, and us in our turn. In a volume of tributes to Lamb, I chanced on an appreciation by E. V. Lucas, in which he says:

> Before Elia, no one writing for print had assumed that his own impressions of life, grave and gay, were a sufficient, or even a suitable subject.

This seemed to me absurd, if only because E.V.L. had forgotten Sterne. And the more I read and thought about Lamb, the more the idea of Sterne came popping into my head. Is it true that nobody who likes one cares much for the other? If so, is it because of their likeness, as well as their unlikeness? For there is a likeness, though both sides hate to admit it, and a very close one. Read some of the *Popular Fallacies*, such as *You must lie down with the Lamb*, and you will find Sterne's wit, triviality, irrelevance, and some of his art. Sterne I worship; Lamb, I am ashamed to say, I condemn unread, for I have never tackled *John Woodvil* or found anything of his verse that made me go on reading it. I mention these limitations to explain the trepidation with which I embarked upon *The Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb*, edited by E. V. Lucas (three vols., Dent and Methuen, 60*s*.).

* * *

A week of Lamb's company has not, however, proved either long or wearisome, but the reverse. Like so many fascinating people, Lamb expresses himself far more completely and unselfconsciously in his letters than in his essays. There is less propitiatory sweetness and more lovable good nature, while his jokes and his ideas are better when they come spurting out, spontaneous and piping hot, than after they have been worked up into one of Elia's little essays. Part of my pleasure is certainly due to Mr. E. V. Lucas, whose edition is as perfect as sympathy and knowledge can make it: his short notes give immediate clues to all that one wants to know. A few minute points attracted my attention. In a note to "I mean to chain my books more Bodleiano," E.V.L. might have referred to *Books in Chains* by Blades. Both Lamb and his editor would relish that eccentric character who kept tame bookworms and fed them upon Caxton folios. When Lamb wrote: "Mrs. Gold is well, but proves uncoined," his correspondent replied:

> I thought at first you alluded to her not being in a Family way. The phrase was familiar in Dryden's time—"stampt an image" . . . I take it very *unkind* of you to puzzle me so.

E.V.L. might have referred us to that noble line: "And we will coin young Cupids," which must, I think, have been what Manning was thinking of.

* * *

The great interest of the early letters is the light they throw on the emotional relationship of Charles and his sister Mary, eleven years his senior, who stabbed her mother to death in a fit of the recurrent mania which persisted throughout her life. Lamb's letters to Coleridge show an almost complete absence of grief for his mother, while there is something like an expression of unconscious triumph in his noble decision to live with Mary afterwards. The early correspondence with Coleridge is interrupted by a quarrel on Lamb's side; Coleridge wrote a moving and beautiful letter which called forth a spiteful one, which was followed by a really nasty one to Southey, in which he boasts of his spite. In another place cruel mockery of Godwin follows immediately on a letter censuring Coleridge for slandering absent friends, of which Lamb has heard a report. But in the same letter we get a whiff of the authentic charming humour which grows more and more pronounced throughout Lamb's life:

> G. Burnett has finished an essay . . . the purport of it is to persuade the world that opinions tending to subversion of Established Religion and Governments . . . should not be rashly vented . . . a good orthodox doctrine and familiar in England; but it is novel to George. . . . Critics should think of this before they loosely cry out: this is commonplace, what is there new in it? it may be all new to the author, he may never have thought of it before, and it may have cost him as much brain-sweat as a piece of the most inveterate originality.

A page or two later he speaks of visiting a poet after the death of a friend:

> At first I imagined George was touched with some sense of kindred mortality, such as Methusaleh himself must have felt, when he was qualmish; but no, all that disturbed George was that he had not got a tribute.

There is a verbal felicity which reflects a most lovable irresistible quality in Lamb; thus he writes to a friend in China:

> What evidence have you of the Nativity? 'tis our rosy-cheeked, home-stalled divines, whose faces shine to the tune of *Unto us a child is born;* faces fragrant with the mince-pies of half a century, that alone can authenticate the cheerful mystery.

Food plays an increasing part in the letters, for Lamb had one gift that all must envy: he was a natural-born *recipient*, on whom his acquaintances showered presents of game and sucking-pigs, being repaid with quips such as: "Your presents make up for your absence," or "By the way, I am anxious to get specimens of all English Turkeys. Pray send me, at your leisure, specimens from all the counties in Great Britain." It would be pleasant to have the opportunity of modelling one's correspondence upon these letters. He is delightful about drink:

> I got home tolerably well, as I hear, the other night . . . I floated upstairs on the coachman's back, like Ariel. "On a bat's back do I fly, after sunset merrily."

* * *

Mary's letters are extremely valuable, and occasionally reveal some of Charles's high spirits. Particularly charming is the story of how the cries of an imprisoned cat led to the discovery of four walled-up rooms in their chambers; from it one gets a true and happy picture of their life between the recurrent fits of her madness, which, as Charles lamented: "cut great slices of the time, the little time, that we shall have to live together." Of all Lamb's elaborate hoaxes perhaps the funniest is the cruel one on Crabb Robinson, to whom he complained of an acute attack of rheumatism, ending:

> You owe your exemption to temperance, which it is too late for me to pursue. I, in my life, have had my good things. Hence my frame is brittle, yours strong as brass. Well, I don't want to moralise.

Crabb Robinson was at the time undergoing a cure for acute rheumatism and wrote a tender letter of sympathy, and Lamb replied that he had never felt better in his life.

> I could not resist the jeer. How mad you'd be! . . . 'tis but one that suffers to make thousands rejoyce. . . . 'Tis Good Friday. How appropriate! Think but when your little finger pains you what —— endured to whitewash you and the rest of us. . . . You won't save the soul of a mouse. You can scarcely scrue a smile out of your face, can you? I sit at immunity and sneer *ad libitum*.

Strangely enough almost all of us would prefer laughing over such a letter, when we are ill, to the usual hang-dog expressions of half-felt concern.

* * *

Lamb's chief importance is probably as the critic who had the originality to bring back a taste for the great Elizabethans,

who, with the exception of Shakespeare, had been almost forgotten for a century. Lamb's critical judgment of the early dramatists is astonishingly good. It is interesting that he wanted to publish a third edition of *Rosamund Gray*, the novelette he wrote when he was twenty-one, when he was fifty. The nearest thing to it in quality are the skits of such novels written by Jane Austen four or five years before, when she was sixteen or seventeen. She was the same age as Lamb, but we never meet her name in his writings, although Coleridge admired her novels and must have spoken of her to him. Perhaps there are two kinds of humour: an emollient protective sort, that hides and heals the burns of life, and an acid sort that bites and burns into human nature and reveals it to us. Lamb, who had the first, might not have appreciated Miss Austen, who had the second. He disliked Sterne and found Voltaire dull, liked Blake's *Tyger*, disliked all Shelley's poetry, and is strangely silent about Keats:

> Nothing puzzles me more than time and space, and yet nothing puzzles me less; for I never think about them.

There is the fresh flavour of mint in that.

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

Paths of Glory. By HUMPHRY COBB. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
Woman of Glenshiels. By LENNOX KERR. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
Four Gardens. By MARGERY SHARP. *Barker.* 7s. 6d.
In Search of Love. By FRANCIS STUART. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
The House of the Spaniard. By ARTHUR BEHREND. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

Paths of Glory appeared a fortnight ago, and has drawn a machine gun fire of adjectives. It is clearly not a book that you can feel calmly about; it is difficult to appraise and not possible to dismiss. Its accuracy as a war document is, apparently, open to question, but I cannot feel that the book stands or falls by this. *Paths of Glory* is less a novel "about" the French front line during the last European war than a study of pressure, distortion and the confused, abject indignation men in the mass feel: it is a novel about war. Mr. Cobb narrows his war down to the execution of three men to save a general's face. He is certain enough in his moral touch, and writes well enough—not simply in the sense of literary facility or persuasiveness, but in operating on the reader's imagination with a deadly effectiveness—to be allowed an artist's prerogatives. It is possible that these executions did not happen. But it is equally possible that they might. Mr. Cobb pursues war to its meanest and last implications, as the French pursue love or Americans drink. Had Mr. Cobb, given an equal seriousness of purpose, chosen to place this incident on the Ruritanian front, it would have been immaterial: its gravity stays the same. It could not have occurred in the British army; the British are not so thorough.

Paths of Glory has been compared to *All Quiet on the Western Front*. It entirely lacks, however, the Teutonic mawkishness and is not gratuitously revolting—physically, at least. Its horrors are on a different plane, and more frightening because they have a more general relation to life. Mr. Cobb makes war not so much a specific malady, occupying in space an area, in time a term of years, as a mobilisation of every human faculty to suffer and to deteriorate. He outrages, deliberately and, I think myself, magnificently, reticences and decencies which we English still agree to observe—I cannot myself see why. By hinging the plot of the book on an incident that may, arguably, be preposterous, he turns what I take to be an indifferent flank to attack by people who will dislike this book for subconscious reasons connected with family portraits, "the little grey church across the park," or from a sense that, war or no war, one must be decent in order to live at all. . . . It is hard for an adult person to examine authority. The exercise of an authority that reason cannot support puts men in a wretched position and makes crooks of them. With things as Mr. Cobb sees them, there is much to be said, humanly, even for General Assolant. . . . I should like to quote from this book, but quotations would have to be too long. It certainly should be read.

Woman of Glenshiels and *Four Gardens* are both books about women—or, rather, a woman. Both follow their central figures, Mary and Caroline, from girlhood to late maturity. Mr. Kerr's is the more serious, Miss Sharp's the more charming book. At the outset, Mary, the worker of Glenshiels, looks like being one of these "strong" characters—the whole book, at the first glance, appears forbidding, with pages in dialect and a smoky setting. Actually, Mr. Kerr has written not only an excellent but a very likeable book: its stuff is grim and its implications are serious, but his manner stays undramatic—lively but calm. Mary has faults; she is a born *bourgeoise*, attaching herself passionately to objects—the green coat-and-skirt of her girlhood, the furniture of "the Room" in her married home—passionate in her opposition to ideas. "Her business in life was to live." Her feeling for order is almost poetic. Imagination and theory being her enemies, her relations with Donald, her first lover, are a tussle. The war helps her break him; after a white-feather incident in her presence his pacifism collapses; he joins up; her smiles reward him and he is killed. With Dan, her husband, superficially a plain man, her troubles are not at an end: Dan does not drink but he reads, and after his loss of work she sees him as an escapist. . . . Mary's visit to the County Court—where Dan stands in the dock for a breach of the relief laws (for which his wife is responsible)—is very good. She has always stood by the law; now it is her enemy. "She shivered and stared submissively at the empty benches. . . . Their feet rang on the uncovered wooden flooring and they dared not walk far."

Caroline of *Four Gardens* is a much milder person. She does not live deliberately; her gentle, apologetic imagination centres round four gardens. This is a *vie rêvée* novel, written in terms of common sense, with surprises and consternations very skilfully chronicled. Miss Sharp's style is accomplished; at once composed and alert. Her book is excellently concrete; I cannot remember one abstract noun in it. I think it is a book principally for mothers, but no one could fail to like it, or read it with any displeasure; everyone in it is either nice or funny and everything turns out well. If you have behaved well and gently your whole life, and been genuinely fond of people, you cannot fail to be happy, even as a widow with six tulips in a roof-garden, a teapot and a cake.

In Search of Love is disappointing. I had looked forward to knowing Mr. Francis Stuart's work, and do still hope to know the rest of it, for his qualities as a writer appear even here. But I feel it must be a pity he wasted them on this book, which, straining after topicality, only achieves out-of-dateness. Margaret Hubbard, the chauffeur's widow with a bosom suggesting repose to everyone, is a dear thing: no wonder they starred her as Everybody's Mummy. But Coral, the British film star, is not a success; her get-ups reek of the nineteen-twenties; she would never get an offer from Hollywood. Mr. Stuart too clearly expects her to dazzle. Her adventures read like an early Paul Morand story retold in Dublin. The whole virtue of a smile is that it should be involuntary: again and again in this book one finds oneself wishing to smile.

The House of the Spaniard is a very good thriller, in the John Buchan manner, but all the better for that. Mr. Behrend has a feeling for country and quickly moving events. I enjoyed it, and recommend it with confidence to anybody wanting to read a thriller. It gives you that welcome "rather he than I" feeling, suspends your own anxieties and increases the comfort of an armchair.

ELIZABETH BOWEN

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Oliver Goldsmith. By STEPHEN GWYNN. *Thornton Butterworth.* 15s.

Oliver Goldsmith is one of those solid and estimable writers whose virtues—and they are various—make him peculiarly difficult to appreciate at the present time. *The Deserted Village*, *The Traveller*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*—all belong to that sad company of "selected classics" whose reputation stands in the way of the critic's enjoyment. They are books that we were obliged to read at school; and from the monotony of the English hour only the greatest masterpieces manage to escape with fascination entirely undimmed. Mr. Gwynn has succeeded in the delicate business of producing both a sympathetic portrait of an odd and uncommonly gifted man and an intelligent account of his contribution to English literature. It was Goldsmith's ease and artlessness that his contemporaries valued. To Horace Walpole his humour was merely "low"; but even Walpole confessed that he had laughed at *She Stoops to Conquer*. To his friends, he was an irresponsible and childish being who "wrote like an angel," though he talked like an Hibernian parrot.

He was natural in two senses of the word: a "natural"—simpleton or zany—who tumbled through life, loud-voiced and bumptious, perpetually meeting with the most ludicrous misadventures; and the poet and essayist endowed with an exquisite natural style. "The effect that Goldsmith's 'Vicar' had upon me," declared Goethe, coming, as it did, at a very critical stage of intellectual development, "is not to be described. . . . That lofty and benevolent irony, that fair and indulgent view of all infirmities and faults, that equanimity under all changes and chances, and the whole train of kindred virtues, proved my best education." To-day, alas, the beauty of the Vicar's character seems a somewhat less important literary asset than at the time Goethe was writing; and, while the "lowness" of Goldsmith's subject-matter fails to alarm, the simplicity of his manner has ceased to captivate. Just as the *jardin anglais*, once beloved of Marie Antoinette and Philippe Egalité, has provided the model for every suburban pleasance in the land, so Goldsmith's naturalness has lost its charm through adaptation. We are more conscious of the crudities and absurdities of the tale unfolded, than of the qualities of draughtsmanship revealed by the figure of the hero himself.

Our interest, therefore, is centred on the novelist rather than on his work—or on the characteristics of his work as they may be traced to his personal career. His friends found him lovable but supremely exasperating. Never was there a man with more bonhomie—though envy sometimes made him ill-natured—yet so little good sense. He was vain; he was improvident; he was boastful. He worked hard; but all that he earned went on cards, sponging Irish acquaintances, women of the town and fine clothes (for which he had an inordinate fondness) of the most inappropriate and garish colour and cut. Invite him to a dinner party; and he would not rest till he had monopolised the attention of the entire gathering. Then he rattled away at the top of his form. . . . Neglected, however, he grew quarrelsome; and there was one occasion—one awful and never-to-be-forgotten occasion—when, in a fit of pique, he had presumed to let fly at the great Doctor himself, and been annihilated by a single tap of that bear-like paw.

"Sir, you are impertinent," growled the Doctor, aroused by Goldsmith's suggestion—probably not altogether unfounded—that for the last half hour other members of the party had been unable to get a word in edgeways. But it was hard to dislike Goldsmith for very long—his impertinence and his penitence were equally spontaneous—and, later in the evening, Johnson, noticing his discomfiture, made handsome amends. . . . This incident belongs to the days of his glory; and, during the years that followed his return to England from his Bohemian Grand Tour, Goldsmith's life had been of the dullest, harshest and barest. There was the wretched spell of school-mastering at Peckham, and there was the miserable Grub Street period, so vividly summoned up by Bishop Percy of the *Reliques*, who visited him while he was writing his *Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning* and found him—

> in a wretched dirty room, in which there was but one chair. . . . While they were conversing, someone gently rapped at the door, and being desired to come in, a poor ragged little girl of very decent behaviour entered, who, dropping a curtsie, said, "My mamma sends her compliments, and begs the favour of you to lend her a chamber-pot full of coals."

At a subsequent period, though he was better lodged and clothed, his existence was almost as laborious; and it is pleasant to learn that he had his moments of lawless relaxation, as when he managed to squeeze an advance out of his publisher, whom he informed that his creditors were hard on his heels, hurried off (followed by the publisher at a distance) and was seen, at Hyde Park Corner, to hop into a hired chaise—with an amiable courtesan inside—and leave London for an expensive Cyprian holiday.

Mr. Gwynn makes the most of Goldsmith's virtues—his generosity, industry and courage—and does his best to find a decent excuse for his follies. Now and then, the method grows a trifle prosy. Mr. Gwynn is the old-fashioned type of biographer. He feels that Goldsmith needs a great deal of excuse, and is at some pains to portray his hero in a consistently favourable light. The effect is not always very opportune; and, though readers may agree with Mr. Gwynn's general estimate of Goldsmith's literary importance, certain of his statements—the suggestion, for example, that, whereas Gibbon was "positively a bad influence," Goldsmith wrote a prose "that every wise man would imitate if he could"—seem to fly singularly wide of the mark. But, on the whole, *Oliver Goldsmith* is a useful volume. Under the pressure of circumstances, Goldsmith produced a huge mass of second-rate prose; and Mr. Gwynn has dived into his collected writings and brought up many passages of permanent value. There is an harmonious fragment from *The Citizen of the World*:

> Life sues the young like a new acquaintance: the companion, as yet unexhausted, is at once instructive and amusing; its company pleases; yet, for all this, it is but little regarded. To us, who are declined in years, life appears like an old friend; its jests have been anticipated in former conversation; it has no new story to make us smile, no new improvement with which to surprise; yet still we love it: destitute of every agreement still we love it; husband the wasting treasure with increased frugality, and feel all the poignancy of anguish in the fatal separation.

And from Goldsmith's less known and less carefully finished works Mr. Gwynn has extracted some amusing and characteristic flights of fancy. *Animated Nature*—Goldsmith's hack work on natural history—has yielded up several charming paragraphs; and, among these, I have an especial fondness for his description of the gander who, after a display of strength and hardihood, "returns to his female and her brood in triumph, clapping his wings, screaming and showing all the marks of a conscious superiority. . . . It is probable that there is not a more respectable animal on earth to a goose than a gander." PETER QUENNELL

MONTPARNASSE

Exile's Return. By MALCOLM COWLEY. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

They started coming to Montparnasse in ones and twos immediately after the war. Some had served with the French Army. By the middle twenties they were swarming. The migrations of the Jews must have been like those waves of American painters, writers, sculptors and their hangers-on which tossed with nasal roar among the flimsy chairs and Vermouth-splashed tables of the Rotonde and the Dôme. The other races in the quarter detested them in theory and liked them in practice. They drove up prices in hotels and restaurants and were rowdy in their cups. They dressed fantastically—the most bogus Munich or Chelsea artist could not compete sartorially with the American gone Bohemian. And their talk! Even the best of it was infected with that St. Vitus dance of young talkers, the perpetual paradox, which had come belatedly to America; or by what in Mr. Malcolm's Pittsburgh High School was called "the theory of convolutions." By this theory, you "discovered" Wilde and praised him because no one else had "discovered" him yet; when they caught up, you disparaged Wilde and moved on to Laforgue. On this principle the American exiles of the period plodded laboriously through the language of symbolism, surrealism and Dada, with the fervour and promiscuity of another Brigham Young. Tristan Tzara, Ezra Pound, Joyce and Gertrude Stein and Eliot completed for these exiles what the low state of the franc, Main Street and Prohibition had begun.

Yet when they were not doing their duty by culture, they were mostly nice, gay, simple people, agreeably shrewd and generous in enthusiasm. There were serious writers among them. A generation which produced Hemingway, dos Passos, E. E. Cummings, Kay Boyle, Edmund Wilson and one or two first-class suicides cannot in its entirety he accused of futility. Mr. Cowley, who was in the thick of their fervours and quarrels, has made a sympathetic and thoughtful analysis of the ideas which moved these young remittance men and women before the slump cut off their incomes and allowances. And the honest English reader will be struck by the similarity of the American situation as it began and as it became, with the English situation of the same period, once the inherent pathos and strain from which the American intellectual suffers has been allowed for.

Mr. Cowley calls his contemporaries "the lost generation":

> It was lost, first of all, because it was uprooted, schooled away, almost wrenched away, from its attachment to any region or tradition.

Again:

> . . . Our whole training was involuntarily directed towards destroying whatever roots we had in the soil, toward eradicating our local and regional peculiarities, toward making us homeless citizens not so much of the world as of international capitalism.

In college the middle-class boy was not trained for the conditions he would have to meet in the world, but for "that international republic of learning whose traditions are those of Athens, Florence, Paris, Berlin and Oxford." It was the timeless, placeless world of scholarship. America had no place for such people, and in England also the accommodation was dwindling. The result

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was that the educated individual took refuge in the more obscure retreats of the eccentric private world.

There is some truth and much interest in Mr. Cowley's diagnosis. From it develops the familiar argument that writers and artists must become concerned with politics, with the problems of a public not a private world. Aestheticism must be abandoned because its products have degenerated to the level of the jig-saw puzzle. But, as Mr. Cowley really knows, generalisations about movements are dangerous and the American mind, with its dutiful love of abstractions, is prone to them. One of his critics, whom he quotes at length, has pointed out that not all American talent had the background which led to the course: Flaubert, the Goncourts, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Yeats, Eliot, Joyce, Tristan Tzara. That was open to a cultivated class and its aspirants, available only to favoured sensibilities. One is struck by the fact that no mention is made of Lawrence. Much play is made of the isolation of Joyce and there is an interesting passage on the intensity and privacy of his ambition; but Mr. Cowley rather naively gives the game away by saying how shocked he was to find that Joyce avoided all intellectuals, lived among dull, bourgeois friends and had fifth-rate views on the subjects which agitated like a neuralgia the culture-phils of the cafés. What a way for a man of genius to live!

Mr. Cowley is engaging enough not to conceal that he is subject to the American herd-instinct in regard to art, while he traces its enthusiasms and reactions. Snobbery and fashion play, perhaps, a useful part in these matters; but there is a new kind of snobbery now which castigates the "flight" to the cottage; the best people should "fly" to the slums. The theory of convolutions does not stop at the Pittsburgh High School. Seeking fresh supplies of the irrelevant, dependent upon the automatic response, it reduces criticism to the labels of topography. Mr. Cowley is not free of this formula habit and he is better when he is reporting the behaviour and gossip of the quarter. I liked the episode in which, crying: "Let us punch the proprietor in the face," he crossed over to the Rotonde and did so. Better still, I like the mockery of dos Passos: "Writers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your brains."

V. S. PRITCHETT

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TIBETAN YOGA

Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines. Arranged and edited by W. Y. EVANS-WENTZ, with foreword by DR. R. R. MARETT. *Oxford University Press.* 16*s.*

The seven treatises which are here so conscientiously edited were made by the late Lama Kazi Dawa-samdup. What is Yoga? The editor objects to the term "self-hypnosis," no doubt because it savours of Western science or pseudo-science. We need not quarrel about terms, so long as we agree that Yoga—there are other names, but I use the one that prevails in this book—claims to be a technique for cutting off sense-perceptions, while at the same time retaining consciousness. Whether this accurately describes what happens to practicants of Yoga or indeed whether "consciousness divorced from sense-perception," is a thing that could possibly exist, need not here concern us.

Yoga has always had two aspects. It has been regarded as an escape from pain and as a method of perceiving the true nature of things. But in early Buddhism the second aspect was wholly subordinate to the first; the object of seeing the true nature of things was to escape from the suffering inherent in ordinary sense-perception. Historically, I think, this double aspect corresponds to the two-fold origin of Yoga practices. It derives on the one hand from methods for producing trance (particularly by breath-manipulation) in order to escape from the pain of wounds, famine and the like. Such methods are still found among primitive peoples. Whereas what we may call the metaphysical side of Yoga is derived from the religious trance of the sacrificial "impersonator," waiting for the god or ancestral spirit to enter into him and partake of the sacrifice through him; and equally, from the trance of candidates at ceremonies of manhood-initiation, during the course of which a "vision" is vouchsafed by the god or ancestor of the tribe. In Indian Yoga, at any rate as we know it at present, these two aspects are inextricably interwoven.

It might seem to us that, though the facts apprehended through Yoga are different from those conveyed by our ordinary senses, it does not in the least follow that they are in any sense better or truer. But the origins of Yoga have made it impossible (as a rule, at any rate) for the Yogi to admit such a view. Just as for the American Indian initiate the "vision" comes from a superior world, so for the Northern Buddhist or Hindu the Thing or things apprehended in Yoga are true and good, compared with the world of the senses, which is illusory and evil.

The vision of the initiate confers power; the stripling becomes a warrior; so too the Yoga initiate becomes possessed of powers (*siddhi*), which in highly sublimated milieus (such as the Young Men's Buddhist Association) are conceived of as wholly spiritual; but which in grosser conception include levitation, self-multiplication, control over the weather, indeed the ability to perform every sort of miracle, including that of "making experimental study of the science of sensual love" (p. 257) without loss of sanctity.

These seven treatises are addressed to the emotions, not to the intellect. They deal (like poetry, advertisements, political speeches, etc.) in what sounds nice, so long as one does not start thinking about it. One might for example, if one began to think about some of the "Precepts of the Gurus," wonder whether they made sense at all: "In being able to pass one's whole life in solitude one does not err" (p. 76). But as I have suggested, one must read this book as people who *believe* in the press read the newspapers; with what Dr. Marett calls "ardour and veritable abandon."

ARTHUR WALEY

HOW ODD OF GOD

How Odd of God. An Introduction to the Jews. By LEWIS BROWNE. *Lane* 6*s.*

Mr. Browne tells the history of the Jews concisely from earliest times, discusses the position of the race in Germany, the modern world, and finally asks the question, "What is it that distinguishes a Jew from other men?" Those chapters dealing with fact could not have been done more objectively, his account of the Marranos in Spain and the Chuetas in Majorca being especially interesting.

He considers that the conflict between Jew and Gentile is not primarily religious or racial. Ninety-nine per cent. of Jews live in towns; some 50 per cent. of Gentiles in the country. The urban Gentile population is being continually recruited from the country. Therefore, Mr. Browne argues, the conflict is primarily between

the man of the soil and the town dweller. The Jew excels in commerical acuteness and intellectual power. The Gentile hates his quick-won ascendancy in all he undertakes. Jealousy is his motivation.

This is too simple. The Orthodox religious Jew is distrusted, because his religion is a barrier against assimilation. The Jew who relaxes that barrier is hated because in his overtures to Gentiles, there is too much of placation. In renouncing Jewry, he is felt to be a traitor to his people, and he arouses antagonism, as a lickspittle. The radical Jew, the original thinker, on the other hand excites the hatred in commonplace people that everything does that is new.

Many Gentiles, though freed from most religious prejudices, preserve from childhood a hatred of the Jews, because they killed Christ, or because they are used in childhood as symbols of dirt. More than that, the Jews, many of whom are governed now by shame of Jewry, inculcated by centuries of persecution, provoke in Gentiles the desire to bully. They are a race that has persisted through suffering and by suffering. Contact with them gives a Gentile the continual feeling that they are expecting to be kicked. The temptation to kick is very hard to restrain.

Mr. Browne is right that the Jews exist by desire of Gentiles. Their position in Gentile history has been the same as that of the scapegoat in their own. So long as Gentiles are ill at ease with themselves, they want Jews to be there so that the blame for all conceivable ills can be heaped upon them.

The Jews on the other hand are to an extent parties to this madness. Even when they abandon their religion and pride of race, they discover some truth which will arouse even greater hatred against them than orthodoxy. Mr. Browne is wrong to think that the common Gentile is indignant when he hears that Freud, Einstein, Bergson and the rest are Jews. He is glad. He hates new truth, because it disturbs his universe. If the discoverer is Jewish, he can attack the truth on the ground of anti-semitism.

Mr. Browne's solution of the Jewish problem is that Jews should turn more to the land, and Gentiles more to the town. Perhaps the solution is rather that the Jew is not a problem to be solved, but a man to be understood. A. CALDER MARSHALL.

THE RUSSIAN LABOUR MOVEMENT

From Peter the Great to Lenin. By S. P. TURIN. *King.* 9s.

If the idea that labour is the sole producer of wealth has taken root more firmly in Russia than anywhere else, it is because in Russia more than in any other country the ownership of labour has been vastly more important than the ownership of land. Russian economic development, that is to say, derives entirely from the institution of serfdom. Wealth was truly measured in terms of the possession of souls, and emancipation came as late as it did because, in the rural economy of the continuously expanding territories of the Empire, the landowner stood to lose rather than gain from the inauguration of a free labour market. With the growth of industry, and at the same time of population, the position was reversed. Hence the economic liberation of the serf.

These are the essential historical facts behind the growth of the Russian labour movement, which is the subject of Mr. Turin's impartial and carefully documented volume. It is rather severely studious in form, but it makes good use of the relevant new material issued in the Red Archives and of recent Soviet researches as well as of the pre-revolutionary literature which the Soviet economic historian has begun to ignore altogether. Mr. Turin is specially concerned with Trade Unionism in Russia, but this, of course, was a late development—the existence of Trade Unions was legalised only after the Revolution of 1905—and in any case Trade Unions played a minor part in the effective labour movement after 1905. Labour organisation in general during the nineteenth century was sporadic, violent and, if so controversial a word may still be employed, more or less "spontaneous." It was, however, inevitably directed towards political ends; before 1861 it envisaged the destruction of serf law; after 1861 it sought the overthrow of autocracy. And from first to last Russian labour organisation had its own peculiar character. In the century and a half that separates the Pugachev rebellion from the Bolshevik insurrection the protesting Russian worker almost invariably made his voice heard through a council of delegates from each of the affected communities. This was the Soviet system in embryo. In 1917, when it

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LIFE AND LETTERS, which was founded in 1928 and edited by Mr. DESMOND MAC CARTHY, is now published as a Quarterly from 26, Maiden Lane, W.C.2, under the title of LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY. *The Editors are* Robert Herring *and* Petrie Townshend.

Art to-day is hemmed in, and if artists lack outlet they can do nothing but breathe their own breath and be stifled. In taking over *Life and Letters*, the first aim of the new editors has been to preserve one of the few remaining channels for work of inspiration and integrity.

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Any bias we have is not towards experiment for its own sake, but to unrecognised achievement. We incline to young writers more for what they may do, given outlet, than for what they have done. But we shall print no authors whose style outruns their sensibility, and as long as the latter looks forward, we do not care to which school the former belongs. We are aware of our debt to the past, but we are conscious also of responsibility to the future, and so we seek, not to split into groups, of which there are already enough, but to select and co-ordinate for the future.

SEPTEMBER ISSUE — now on sale, includes contributions by André Gide, Havelock Ellis, H. D., Osbert Sitwell, Siegfried Sassoon, Gertrude Stein, Horace Gregory, Jean Cassou, Mary Butts, Murray Constantine, Clifford Dyment, John Pudney, Michael Roberts. There are interviews with Walt Disney, René Clair and Toscanini.

DECEMBER will contain work by Heinrich Mann, Marianne Moore, S. M. Eisenstein, Dorothy Richardson, Dylan Thomas, Yone Noguchi, Natan Asch, Norah Hoult, Ramuz, Wallace Stevens, Ignazio Silone, Barbara Low, Roger Money-Kyrle, Jean Prevost.

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emerged anew in the form of factory committees, the system of councils of workers' delegates had behind it the experience of generations of revolutionary struggle.

This emphasis upon the traditional character of the Soviets, and upon the political continuity of the Russian labour movement, forms one of the chief points in Mr. Turin's study. His summary of the principal phases of labour discontent is very well done. Like every other modern student of the event, he sees in the rebellion of Pugachev not a mere predatory Cossack war but a revolutionary struggle of the serfs of the Crown and possessional factories of the Urals in alliance with the oppressed peasantry. When he comes to the period of industrial strikes from the 1860's onwards he demonstrates plainly enough the limitations of "underground" labour organisation and of the kind of trade unionism that developed out of strike committees. Perhaps he might have been a little more positive in his interpretation of the fantastic era of Zubatovshchina, just before the 1905 Revolution, when the secret police tried to get hold of the labour movement, especially in St. Petersburg and in the south, and lead it through strikes and a programme of factory legislation towards the haven of "police socialism." Mr. Turin does not make it sufficiently clear that the object of this methodical madness was to divert the workers, by facilitating their purely economic demands, from all thoughts of political revolution.

Although in March, 1906, Nicholas conceded the principle of trade unionism, the trade union movement simply faded away in the brutal repression immediately stage-managed—with cowardly Liberal assent—by Stolypin. The strikes recommenced in 1910, and the whole movement came to life again as the result of the miners' strike in the Lena Goldfields in 1912. There was a tremendous strike movement on the eve of the war, and the number of workers on strike in 1916 clearly promised something even more formidable than 1905. But this phase of proletarian awakening owed very little to trade union organisation, as Mr. Turin is careful to point out. He adds some very useful appendices and a bibliography.

R. D. CHARQUES

IMPISH FUN

Humour. By STEPHEN LEACOCK. *Lane.* 7s. 6d.

Prof. Leacock should not, perhaps, have called this "a book of discovery." He is mistaken in believing that the subject has never been tackled before; but no doubt he, with his "impish fun and sense of the ridiculous" (as the jacket says) has great advantages while at the same time no one can complain that he is not high-toned. "Laughter," he reminds us, "is the mere beginning of humour, both in time and in significance. The end, the final reach, is nearer to tears."

It cannot be said, however, that he delves deep into the theory of his art; most of the book is devoted to recent examples of it. First we have "Fun with Words"—instances of punning, of hyperbole—"In order to 'put a thing across' we state it strongly, we overstate it, often to a degree not literally possible. This is called a figure of speech"—and of meiosis, which "as nobody knows" means understatement. Then come parody and burlesque: first, verse (but "one could no more parody 'Tears, idle tears and yet I know not why' than he could parody the Sermon on the Mount") then prose—exemplified by thirteen pages (small type) of Prof. Leacock's own skits on the old-fashioned Christmas Story. These are succeeded by an exhaustive account (thirteen more pages) of "the new Sherlock Holmes Higher Criticism" which "stands at the very top plane of the humour of amusement . . . . Thank goodness this vast piece of cheerful and wholesome nonsense seems only beginning." It does not, however, as explained here, sound *very* funny. Chapter IV deals with "the greater humourists"—Dickens and Mark Twain. Their "eminence," indeed, "is marred by lapses"—other writers are more even. "Robert Louis Stevenson, for example, kept a far more uniform standard of excellence, but, and least of all in point of humour, never reached so high." Dickens's funniest things are unluckily too long to quote, but "much in Mark Twain can stand alone,"—e.g.—

> Here we washed in . . . a (previously) limpid stream.

Chapter V is on "Comic and Super-Comic Verse"—of course with extracts. "Super-comic" verse is that which is unintentionally funny; "it is the work of people who would undoubtedly have been poets if they had had education and academic background." Some readers may be surprised to learn that Wordsworth was one of these: to show how funny he *could* be without meaning it, Prof. Leacock quotes the following lines:

> I met a little cottage girl,
> She was eight years old, she said.

Chapter VI is entirely devoted to a comic poem Prof. Leacock himself once wrote about Bristol University. I am afraid I could not quite bring myself to read this poem, and I *do* think that, in the book as a whole, Prof. Leacock is somewhat over-represented. Still, he can be almost equally kind to his friends, as is proved by the chapter on "Story-telling." Some few stories, he says, do not depend on the point—they are amusing all through. "Here is an excellent example. . . . I reproduce the story as I heard it told by my gallant and witty friend Major Charlie Greenshields of the Montreal Bar. . . ." (Then follows a long, flat anecdote which certainly does not depend on the point.) "Of course, such a story is still further heightened when narrated by a finished raconteur such as was my friend."

Dealing with "National Characteristics," he has a warm word for *Punch*—"the highest type, the last word in English humour. . . . It keeps clean away from that terrible obsession of sex. . . ."

Chapter IX, on "Humour through the Ages" is "appended only for scholars; and they won't read it." Most likely not. Prof. Leacock is without doubt a "super-comic" historian. His view is simple: there was almost no humour worth mentioning till the Victorian age. None of the classical writers were at all funny—indeed how *could* anyone be funny in Greek or Latin? The Middle Ages were obviously as dull as ditchwater; true, they had the "minstrels," who "flourished best as the troubadours of Provence," but there are no jokes in *them*, and in any case they were a silly set. "Nor need one pause over-long to consider the humour of the English Chaucer. . . . He told dirty stories well. So did Abraham Lincoln. He lived in a dirty age, of a filth and indecency not known to us now . . ." (Who *is* this "he"?) Then came the Elizabethan era (Rabelais being too dirty, I suppose, even to mention)—

> There is no doubt of the greatness of this . . .
> Think of such sublime lines as the speech of Macbeth:
> To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow . . . [etc. etc.]
> . . . So, too, Bacon in his marvellous essays of which the words and sentences linger unforgotten:
> "What is truth?" said jesting Pilate, "and would not stay for an answer,"
> . . . But humour? . . . I wouldn't mind saying that I consider Irving Cobb a far funnier man than Shakespeare . . . I think Shakespeare himself would have admitted this. He would have said, "Cobb, it marvels me how thou dost it!"

The eighteenth century "represents a great advance" though for the most part its humour "tended to get swamped out in the effusions of militant patriotism." And then, at last, comes the Great Age.

What of the future? It is sad to learn that, in spite of the surpassing funniness of Irving Cobb, decline is imminent. This must be set down largely to "the universal smear of sex," not that there is any harm in obscenity ("dirty jokes are all right . . . I know a lot of them . . . nothing is more wholesome . . . than a group of men roaring in concert at an after-dinner joke"), but for a more occult reason—because women play golf now. Still, if dirty jokes are all right, why the objection to Chaucer and the praise of *Punch*? "It is a mystery."

I have not, after all, been able to do justice to Prof. Leacock's "impish fun." But space is space.

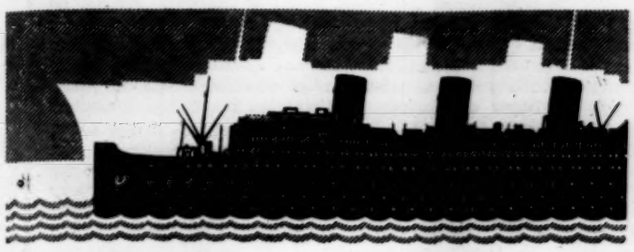
K. JOHN

DIVORCE REFORMERS

Divorce and Its Problems. By E. S. P. HAYNES and DEREK WALKER-SMITH. *Methuen.* 6s.

The authors of this book are conservative. Being intelligent men they realise that it is necessary to remedy obvious grievances if the existing social system is to be retained. They are obsessed by the idea that the family, as they understand it, is the basis of the social structure which they wish to preserve. Mr. Derek Walker-Smith says that "British life is based four-square on religion, the family, property, and traditional liberty." "Four-square" not inaptly describes an attempt to face simultaneously in different directions. Notwithstanding, partly indeed because of, the authors' obsession with regard to the maintenance of the family, they are convinced of the necessity for the reform of our Divorce Law.

The opening chapter on Ethics will probably satisfy no one, but the chapters in which are set forth the history not only of the



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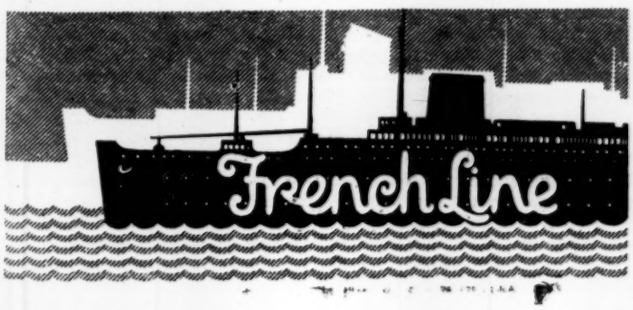

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law itself but the views which have been and are held as to what the law ought to be, are of great interest. It is useful to be reminded that Scotland has allowed divorce on the ground of desertion since 1550, and that there are few countries in the civilised world where our divorce laws would not be regarded as cruel and hopelessly obsolete. The law as it stands with regard to matrimonial relations is explained so as to be understood by the lay public for whom the book is intended. There are one or two points, however, which might be more clearly expressed. For instance, on p. 52 it is stated that a successful petitioner will on request be granted custody of the children under the age of 16. This will usually be the case, but there is no fixed rule, and the benefit and interest of the infant is the paramount consideration. Again on p. 119 a conviction for assault upon his wife is said to be a ground upon which a Court of Summary Jurisdiction can make a separation order against a husband. In fact it must be an "aggravated assault." Also a venereal disease must be knowingly communicated in order to constitute cruelty, and there is a dictum of the late Mr. Justice Avory to the effect that unnatural vice between women is a criminal offence. It was the Lord Chief Justice in 1924, in the case of R. V. Hurst, and not Sir Boyd Merriman in a recent speech, who said, "Justice should not only be done, but be manifestly and undoubtedly seen to be done." There are other statements which might mislead, but these are minor matters when one considers the skill with which the authors have condensed into a volume of 180 pages a mass of learning on a subject bristling with technical difficulties and have made it not only intelligible but readable.

Broadly speaking, the authors support the reforms favoured by the Majority Report of the Royal Commission of 1909. It is appalling to think of the amount of misery which might have been prevented if even those recommendations upon which the great majority of people in this country are in agreement had been passed into law. Unfortunately there is little party capital to be made out of Divorce Law Reform, and there are few subjects which so readily lend themselves to misrepresentation. In a village where I lived the members of a Mothers' Union were told that Lord Buckmaster's Bill in 1920 proposed to enable a husband to divorce his wife on the ground that he had deserted her and did not wish to return. This was widely believed.

The peculiarities of our law of divorce are to a great extent explained by the fact that from the eighth century marriage and divorce in Europe became ecclesiastical, and the Reformation in England, though not in Scotland, scarcely affected this position. The State maintained its supremacy, however, by passing private Acts of Parliament which dissolved marriages. Ninety of such Acts are said to have been passed between 1800 and 1850. The authors have wisely quoted in full Mr. Justice Maule's famous judgment, in which he dealt bitterly with the law as it stood in 1845. Matters are not so much better now as is generally assumed.

The authors of this book appear to be quite satisfied with the way in which the Courts of Summary Jurisdiction deal with separation cases. It is obvious that they have no practical experience of what goes on in the provincial courts. But why, if these courts display the fairness, patience and ability attributed to them by this book, it should be said that it would not occur to anybody to make divorce a matter for the Police Court as it is now, it is hard to understand. The "Police Court" has to try all the usual issues of divorce, including adultery. And the decisions have very serious consequences for the persons concerned.

SOLICITOR

SHORTER NOTICES

Looking Backwards and Forwards. By GEORGE LANSBURY. *Blackie.* 8s. 6d.

The writing of reminiscences is far more of a habit with Mr. Lansbury than with any other prominent member of the Labour movement. His autobiography was written as he passed his seventieth year. This volume, gathering up memories personal and social, reflects the still happy if chastened mood in which he moves towards four-score. He has known East London for sixty-five years, ever since the black Victorian age when all that lay beyond Aldgate was an outcast region in which the ragged-school teacher was a pioneer. Mr. Lansbury gives details of its rawness and barbarity, but he will not admit that the older East London was joyless. His own circumstances were always comfortable, except for a calamitous venture with his young family in Queensland, and from early manhood he was an employer who counted himself a workman and took the worker's point of view. It is odd to think of this thorough Londoner fighting an election at Middlesbrough, he who was the predestined member for Bow and Bromley. That seat he threw up, in 1912, to test the vote on women's suffrage, with the result that he was out of Parliament during the whole period of the war. He has no regrets on this score, for he then controlled the *Herald* (at that time a weekly) and is persuaded that as editor he was of more account than he could have been as M.P. He gives here a score or so short personal sketches. Mr. Lansbury is catholic in his admiration. He can praise at once Gladstone and Bradlaugh, Catherine Booth and Emmeline Pankhurst, Joseph Fels and Jack Jones. Lenin he sees as the wisest and most simply single-minded man I ever met," despite his own uncompromising opposition to force and violence. Old readers of the *Daily Herald* will delight in the disclosure that in 1912 George Lansbury and Ben Tillett wanted Frank Harris to edit the paper. He was quite ready—making the condition that the Teachings of Christ should be the only basis! Mr. Lansbury is sorry that Harris was not allowed to try, for "it would have been something unique in history." It would.

Public Speaking. By ARCHIBALD CRAWFORD, K.C. *Pitman.* 7s. 6d.

From his wealth of experience as a platform speaker, as a member of the Bar, as a Parliamentary candidate, as an organiser of capitalist propaganda, and as an after-dinner speaker, Mr. Crawford gives his readers the essentials of effective speaking; with illustrations taken from his own successes and failures, and from the methods of famous speakers of his time. It is not to the born orator he addresses himself, but to those who desiring to speak feel that they have not it in them to be successful. Mr. Crawford had the good fortune to be trained by his father, himself a famous speaker, and these lessons give the keynote to the whole argument. Mr. Crawford had it drilled into him that he must at first learn to speak clearly and simply, from a mind fully prepared, and stored with the ideas and facts he was called upon to express; and that it was always desirable that the speaker should have a "picture" in his mind, of himself addressing his audience and of the form his speech would assume. That avowed, notes, as a rule, could be dispensed with. Facts against as well as for the argument should be marshalled, and both always far in excess of what could be used. Starting on this basis Mr. Crawford discusses all manner of circumstances and gives all manner of hints for coping with them, and in the result he forges a weapon for use on every occasion and for every purpose.

Anthony Hope and His Books. By SIR CHARLES MALLET. *Hutchinson.* 18s.

It is Sir Charles Mallet's opinion that if Anthony Hope Hawkins had not been lured from the Bar by his easy success as a writer he might have had a distinguished legal and political career. There is little in this charming and intimate study of the man to justify that opinion. He hated the drudgery of the law and had little liking for the hurly-burly of politics. The one profession outside that which he chose for himself for which he seems to have been temperamentally fitted was diplomacy. In the atmosphere of Courts and Chancelleries, one feels, the creator of Ruritania and of the characters who flit through his social comedies would have been at home. It is true that as he grew old and his once facile invention flagged he may have sighed for the dignified ease of bench or woolsack; but how he would have sighed as he toiled to those eminences. No, for all his occasional despondency and his frequent depression, he was a born writer; a lover and eager student of the life he portrayed and satirised; and in this admirable book we see him as he saw himself and as his friends saw him, witty and generous and worldly wise; and his books and plays in the making, as good a study of industrious authorship as any neophyte could desire.

The Adventures of Sajo and Her Beaver People. By GREY OWL. *Lovat Dickson.* 7s. 6d.

Those who know *Pilgrims of the Wild*, Grey Owl's autobiography, in which he told us of his conversion from hunting to the protection of the creatures that had been his natural prey, will remember his charming story of the beavers he tamed and came to know so intimately. In this story, written apparently for children, he tells us how an Indian hunter brought home two beaver kittens for his children, and how after a time, things not going well with him, he was forced to sell one of the beavers into the captivity of a private zoo. The children, left alone, and finding that their remaining pet is pining, set out to redeem his companion, which they do after many forest adventures, including a fire. It is an admirable story of its kind.

Randlords. By PAUL H. EMDEN. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 15s.

From the day of the monastery-robbers to the day of the Nabobs, from the Gradgrinds and Bounderbys of the Industrial Revolution to the Profiteers of the Great War, this country from time to time has been called upon to assimilate unnatural up-growths of the new rich; but never had it a more indigestible task than when those whom Mr. Emden calls the "Randlords" mushroomed upon the scene. It is all over now, and as we look back with Mr. Emden in his dramatic stories of Kimberley and The Rand we see how much more human these fabulous money-spinners were than they seemed to be at the time. Mr. Emden tells his stories uncommonly well. First he gives us the positions. The discovery of diamonds, and then brief studies of the men who so amazingly exploited it. Then he turns to the discovery of gold and those who came to control the mines. Mr. Emden is no white-washer. He states the facts as they are known and pictures the men as they seemed to themselves and to their friends and enemies; and in the result we have as entertaining a story of high finance in a bizarre *milieu* as anyone has given us.

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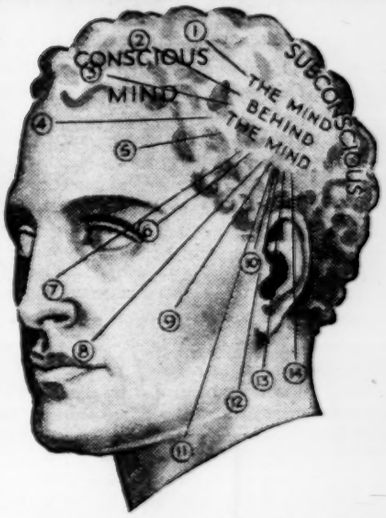

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About Motoring

THE DECAY OF MOTOR CYCLING

It is sad to record a small but significant decay in the popularity of motor cycling, as demonstrated by a decrease in the number of machines registered. The sadness is due to two factors, the one technical, and the other social. Technically, the British motor cycle industry boasts a post-war record which possibly outshines that of any other industry in the world, for during these difficult years it has offered its customers amazing value at less than pre-war prices; it has forced sales across practically every tariff wall in the world, no matter how lofty; and in the area of sport its products have proved internationally invincible everywhere. But a variety of circumstances have robbed its engineers and financiers of their due reward. In the past motor cycles sold principally to the more juvenile members of the well-to-do classes, and to the more prosperous artisans. The labour market in recent years has never guaranteed prosperity to the working man, and artisans to-day dare not venture on the purchase of new motor cycles in any large quantities. The other market, which might perhaps be labelled as an "undergraduate" market, is very largely extinct. Few parents, able to give their sons and daughters expensive educations, can nowadays manage the additional cost of a motor cycle; and those parents who have surplus money to spend after paying school and college bills, mostly prefer to buy their children baby cars, probably of the sporting type. Indeed, wealthy adolescents themselves normally prefer a small car to a motor cycle, because the death of the chaperone permits a lad to take a lass with him, and the lass pardonably prefers a baby saloon or a sports two-seater to the dirt and exposure of a seat on the pillion of a motor cycle. Nowadays a perfectly roadworthy small car, third or fourth hand, can be bought for much less than £50, which is an average price for a new motor cycle. Incidentally, these used small cars have sounded the knell of the sidecar, which once furnished the cheapest available fast transport for two people. It follows that the most energetic and successful of our minor industries is being slowly starved to death, and that motor cycling tends to become a class hobby in these islands, as it has long since ranked as a class hobby in the States and on the Continent. This lamentation is by no means purely technical or industrial, for any spirited youngster profits morally and emotionally by the ownership and use of a motor bicycle. It develops his responsibility and judgment and self-control in a fashion unshared by any other expensive toy which a rich parent may purchase as an alternative, a small aeroplane alone excepted. Naturally, the slow decay of the motor cycle industry is one item in the vast spectacle of unemployment, for when mechanisation of the industry is added to a reduced output, this industry contributes its thousands to the roll of men on the dole.

It may reasonably be urged that the Government should do what is possible to foster an industry which has evinced its efficiency so unmistakably. The reduction of sales to prosperous artisans is not exclusively due to falling wages or to the insecurity of jobs. The tax on motor cycles has been reduced this year; but this drop in registration fees is more than offset by the imposition of compulsory third party insurance. When the nett imposts on motor cycles are compared with the nett imposts on cars, and both are plotted against the respective costs of sundry types of vehicle, the motor cyclist has a very genuine grievance. For example, the millionaire who buys a 40–50 h.p. Rolls-Royce car with a standard type of body must pay £33 in tax and £42 in insurance, an annual disbursement which amounts to a levy of *three per cent.* on his capital expenditure of £2,500. But if a labourer in the building trade, employed by a firm which operates over an area in which public transport services are poor, especially in the early morning, elects to provide his own transport, and so render his labour more mobile and therefore efficient, he must pay an annual levy of about £6 for tax and for third party insurance. Many such labourers pick up aged motor bicycles for as small a sum as £5, and are therefore saddled with an impost of about one hundred per cent. on their transport outlay. To render the comparison more fair, we may assume that such a labourer buys a new motor bicycle at about the minimum price which will insure prolonged and reliable journeyings. This will cost him say thirty pounds, and his annual tax-cum-insurance impost works out at about *twenty per cent.* of his outlay. This is six times as great as the Government demand on the millionaire who buys a Rolls. If these two contrasted imposts are weighed against the two motorists' incomes, the discrepancy and the injustice are even more pronounced; for the millionaire probably enjoys an income of about £1,000 per week, whereas the labourer draws £2–£3 every Friday evening. In other words, the labourer pays three weeks' income for the privilege of using the national roads, whereas the millionaire pays less than one day's income.

As far as we know, the bulk of the motor cycles in use on our roads are employed largely for pleasurable purposes. But these purposes are quite as vital as the utility riding which contributes to the efficiency of national industries. A man with a small weekly wage, and possessed of no personal transport, can choose between a wide variety of hobbies in his evening and week-end leisure. But if he is at all wearied by his day's labour, which is usually exhausting to the body and perhaps fretting to the mind, he has small choice of outdoor hobbies, and an outdoor hobby is desirable in his best interests. He may have no opportunity to play golf, tennis, cricket, football, or even bowls, and little inclination to walk. But a motor cycle will carry him a hundred miles for a couple of shillings, and its ownership makes him free of a huge circle containing hundreds of square miles with his home as a centre. It is possibly more important that the handling of the machine enforces concentration, and thereby scours his mind clean of all worries, industrial or domestic. Driving a motor cycle is not regarded by many people as "exercise," but in actual fact it stands in quite a different category from a journey in a closed car. Medical men have not, as far as I know, analysed the contrast; but the fact remains that a three-hour run on a motor cycle, with the person exposed to the breezes, exhilarates the rider physically quite as notably as a week-end by the sea.

All these facts are recognised and valued by the governments of other nations. Several Continental nations liberate all motor cycles up to an arbitrarily selected horse power or price from all revenue imposts. It is arguable that even a financial economy might result if the Government freed all motor cycles below 250 c.c. from the annual tax, and itself bore their third party liabilities. It is unquestionable that such a reform would be very profitable in other directions.

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Week-end Competitions

No. 287

Set by Flora Grierson

Bans are the vogue to-day, tolerance is discredited. In Germany Jews are forbidden at seaside resorts; in England "coloured persons" may not disport themselves in public bathing-pools. But this delightful new game has not yet been exploited nearly as thoroughly as it could be. I feel that social relations could be made far more diversified, daring, and amusing if the system of banning were to be developed. We offer our usual prizes (two guineas, and half a guinea) for six suggested bans to be put by any nation or community on any other nation, race, or skin, with reasons calculated to appeal to the official mind. The bans should be appropriate to the persons on whom they are imposed, so that they may lead to the usual complications, and provide the public with plenty of victims whom they may legally and righteously bait. Thus it would be no use banning Jews from the country life because they degraded nature's purity, since Jews are notoriously town-lovers; but Europeans might be banned from the night-clubs of Liberia, because their naked appearance and strong smell shocked the susceptibilities of the fathers of young Liberian girls.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, September 20th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 285

Set by Hamish Miles

The director of the Poetry Society was recently reported as saying that "If Milton came back, he would not get the £5 he received for *Paradise Lost*."

We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a letter not exceeding 250 words, addressed to Mr. Milton, in which a present-day publisher *either* declines the manuscript of *Paradise Lost* and proffers his reasons, *or* makes an offer of £5 for it.

Report by Hamish Miles

Most of the entrants for this competition write as if they had had some considerable experience of receiving letters of rejection from publishers, and several make it all too clear that a "No" can be said so nicely that it hurts. Quite a number seemed to have no knowledge of *Paradise Lost* beyond the fact that it is very long, and one competitor (whose name I mercifully withhold) was obviously thinking of Dante's *Inferno*. Nobody went so far as imagining that the publisher might be attracted by the publicity value of the poet's blindness, but Alexander Bell's firm of Quarto and Quire wrote: "We note that the National Federation of Examiners in English will be holding its Annual Conference early next year, and think that your work might possibly appeal to them as eminently suited to the purposes of a prescribed text." Several suggested compression, revision, a snappier title, and so on; M. Snow thought that "A rhymed version might be acceptable to church-goers"; Gauvain remarked that "The interest flags when delightful Eve is off the stage"; and H. C. Riddell felt that "We might be able to do something with it in the Christmas market." One reader did not trouble to carry out the requirements of the competition at all, but wrote a four-page letter on the crushing of poetry by the novel in modern times.

On the whole, no high level of ingenuity, wit, malice, or cupidity was reached, and I feel that justice would be done by awarding one guinea each for the entries of "G. and K. T." and T. Naisby. Here they are:

John Milton, Esq.,
Freshfields, Boar's Hill, Oxford.

DEAR MR. MILTON,

We regret that we must decline the MS. of your poem, *Paradise Lost*, which we are despatching to you to-day by rail.

In our experience it is a bad policy for a successful writer to attempt to change his line of country. You have already run some risk of confusing your public by contributing the libretto to a revue at the Open Air Theatre,* and for us to undertake to publish a versification of the Scriptures at this juncture would be to court disaster. We have to consider the sale of your pamphlets, which, as you know, is at present satisfactory. The two essays on Divorce, the attack on the Sedition Bill and the sketch of Russian history are still going particularly well. If sales continue, we might consider a uniform edition in a slightly more durable format.

Yours faithfully,
SAMUEL SYMONS
"G. and K. T."
Your Reference: AR/EOP/AGIT/1644.

[* The ignorance of publishers is proverbial.]

DEAR MR. MILTON,

I have been in communication with a Mr. Doestmann, now deceased, who was acting as your agent in the matter of a poem, *Paradise Lost*, submitted to us 21/11/33. My attention has been called to and my interest engaged in parts of Books IV, V, IX and XII. In these Adam and Eve scenes you have a good idea which, by judicious pruning, could be made to suit my requirements. In a revised form I should probably be able to use it in *Modern Love Poems*, which I am bringing out shortly.

My Reader advises that the theological theme be deleted; sheer theology and poetry don't easily combine. Obscure references to Baalim, Belial, Sittim, Gibeah must be dropped—that has been done much better in the Bible. Satan, too, might come out; the conception is rather *démodé*, and your attitude, it appears, is not derisory. The title, too, is misleading. What do you think of "Eden Escapade" or "Need in Eden"? The poem as it stands is prolix and lacks directness. This passage struck me:

". . . Meanwhile at Table, Eve
Ministerd naked and thir flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crowned . . ."

I recommend revision on these lines and the adjustment of spelling slips. Bridges played out that game, I think.

Pursuing our policy of encouraging young authors, I offer you provisionally £5, subject to our usual conditions. Perhaps you will favour us with an immediate reply, or call in to discuss the matter.

(Signed) INDECIPHERABLE
T. NAISBY.

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 142.—SANS PUTT ET SANS APPROACH

Baffy, Cleek, Midiron and Spoon can all drive a pretty long ball. Finding themselves at Foozledown one day, they arranged a novel contest.

It consisted of six short driving matches, each at five different holes. At each hole the winner was the competitor who drove the farthest distance down the fairway. As all four players liked a gamble, monetary stakes were arranged. In each match, the winner of an isolated hole received £1 from each of the other three. The winner of two successive holes received £3 (£2 + £1) from each of the others. The winner of three holes received £6 from each of the others (£3 + £2 + £1). And so on up to £15 for five holes.

At the end of each match the four players "settled up."

Baffy had the odd experience of winning or losing the same amount in each match, yet in no two matches did the distribution of the five holes won, among the four competitors, conform to the same pattern. Baffy's average winnings were £1 per match. On the other hand Cleek, who had fancied himself particularly, only won one hole during the day.

How much in all did Cleek lose?

PROBLEM 141.—FISHY

Several competitors have written asking what is meant by "goal average." *Goal average* is the ratio between goals scored *for* and goals scored *against;* thus if team A has scored 9 goals to 4, and team B 11 goals to 5, team A has the better goal average (2.25 to 2.20).

PROBLEM 140.—FROM AN AFRICAN LOG-CABIN

I am somewhat disappointed in the response to this problem, as I thought the clues were "sticking out a yard." In the conjunction of "logs" and "seven strangely assorted figures," followed by the actual code 5017984, solvers could not fail—I imagined!—to recognise that *vade-mecum* of our youth, 7-figure tables of logarithms. 5017984 is the antilog of 31754 and 31754, transliterated, gives the appropriate password CAGED. This is the required answer.

AWARDS

PROBLEM 139.—ROBINSON'S RENDEZVOUS

A set of Low's cartoons goes to Rev. Alfred Lidster, 10 Pole Lane, Failsworth, Manchester. *Twelve points*, as promised, are awarded. These are well earned, as the problem involves a certain amount of factual research; though the number of competitors who receive them is unexpectedly large.

PROBLEM 138.—VILLAGE IDYLL

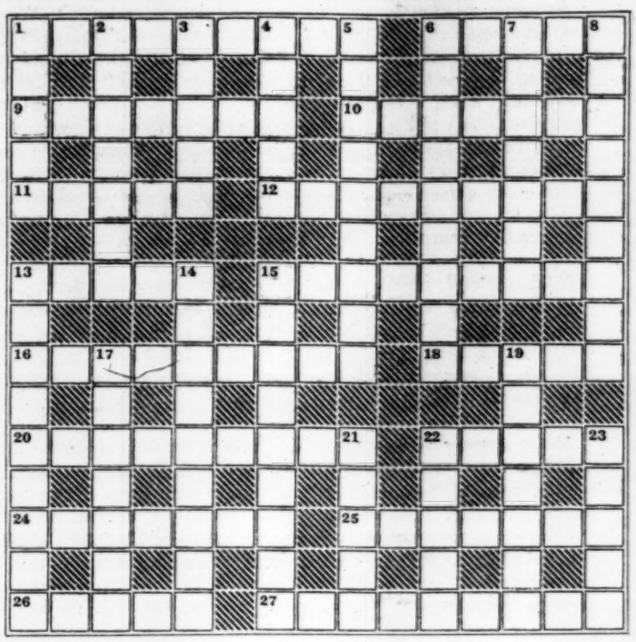
A set of Low's cartoons goes to David Dempster, 36 Goddard Avenue, Swindon.

Five points are awarded.

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 288

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
P. F. Rendell, Summerfield, Winscombe, Somerset

ACROSS

1. They hide the underclothes of course.
6. This Province seems to go in for a Black Mass.
9. Done up before a meal.
10. Miss Day has an appalling effect.
11. You find them top on the organ.
12. How to come back on a circular route.
13. He met Ann.
15. A title for sale?
16. Fighting cocks.
18. Those from the Highlands are plain.
20. Sets the pace of the ball.
22. A difficult task with ropes.
24. Turns one's head so to speak.
25. If you are you should of course be docked.
26. Something soothing from a bondman.
27. In chemistry it would no doubt have litmus in it.

DOWN

1. Alternatively red 22.
2. i.e. spent artfully.
3. Objects of tossing up.
4. Slang for a groat.
5. Ways without a middle way?
6. Condition of one who has a good thirst.
7. Controls the unruly member medically speaking.
8. This is not what the Army does its dirty work in.
13. The Rich Man seems to have been dead some time.
14. Suitable place for ladies' hacking in old-fashioned style.
15. Men reverse the reverse way in the Army.
17. Ferocious sounding piece of machinery suggestive of military training.
19. Those who race get gonged for this.
21. Send up about a race.
22. Lodge palindromically.
23. He goes on others' all fours.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

F	A	I	N	T	H	E	A	R	T	■	A	C	I	D
A	■	L	■	U	■	A	■	O	■	■	■	A	■	R
C	H	E	R	R	Y	R	I	P	E	■	O	T	T	O
E	■	X	■	N	■	T	■	E	■	S	■	C	■	W
■	■	■	N	I	G	H	T	W	A	T	C	H	E	S
A	■	T	■	N	■	■	■	A	■	O	■	P	■	I
L	O	U	N	G	E	R	■	L	A	R	D	O	O	N
O	■	R	■	P	■	E	■	K	■	Y	■	L	■	E
N	O	N	C	O	M	S	■	S	E	T	T	E	R	S
G	■	S	■	I	■	I	■	■	■	E	■	S	■	S
C	A	T	A	N	D	F	I	D	D	L	E	■	■	■
H	■	I	■	T	■	T	■	E	■	L	■	L	■	A
A	W	L	S	■	L	I	T	T	L	E	J	O	H	N
L	■	E	■	■	■	N	■	E	■	R	■	K	■	O
K	I	S	S	■	A	G	G	R	E	S	S	I	O	N

Harley Street Specialist says . . .

British Patent No. 279477.

Linia Belt needed by many men these days

A Harley Street Surgeon writes:

"I should like to express in writing the great satisfaction I have had, personally, from wearing one of your belts. You will gather that I have been more than pleased, as indicated by the numerous recommendations resulting from this personal test over a period of nearly two years.

"From X-ray examination I can testify to the objective improvement in the position of the viscera in every case of mine that you have fitted with a belt. From radiographic investigations *I am convinced that Visceroptosis is common in men these days*, particularly downward displacements of the colon, and, to a lesser extent, of the kidneys.

"*A suitable elastic belt like yours would seem to me one of the best treatments of these conditions*, and I am very surprised that this is not more generally known."

The Linia Belt supports your abdominal organs, rests your abdominal muscles and has a corrective massaging action upon excess fat. You enjoy an immediate sense of fitness and bodily vigour.

Write to-day for "The Danger Curve," a free booklet telling you how the Linia Belt promotes health and ensures comfort.

YOU CAN ORDER BY POST.

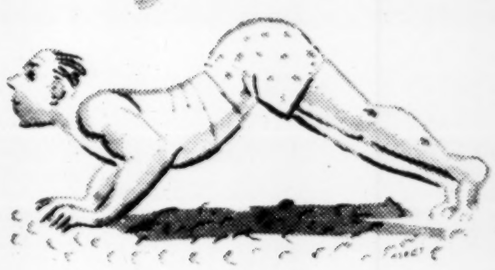
We will fit you personally if you are able to call; but we also guarantee perfect fitting if you will send us by post *your* maximum girth measurement, stating the depth of belt required in front (usually 9 or 10 inches).

The prices of the Linia Belt, including a Linia Jock Strap, are: Popular model 3½ gns. (Black 4 gns.). De Luxe model in pure silk, extra light quality, 6 gns. (Black 7 gns.). Standard model, 2 gns. C.O.D. 1/- extra.

Money returned if dissatisfied.

On Sale Only at
J. V. ROUSSEL, 173 Regent St., London, W.1
City Branch: 43 Cheapside, E.C.2. *Telephone: Regent 7570*
BIRMINGHAM: 14 New St. L'POOL: 6 9th. John St. (Lord St.). MANCHESTER: 12 King St.
L49

Daily Dozen



IT is no easy matter to bid farewell to the friendly phantoms of half-consciousness and the drowsy allurements of the bedclothes. Without the knowledge that your Eno's 'Fruit Salt' is awaiting you, the battle might well be lost before it is begun.

BUT a dash of Eno, dancing and leaping in a glass of water, is most wide-awakening. In a moment you feel as young as the day. The daily dozen becomes a delight. On the hands down is mere child's play—touching the toes a triviality. Cheerfully and confidently you face up to Life, your body invigorated, your system cleansed, your bloodstream purified, ready for a rough and tumble with any of the cares that beset the day.

ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT'

Eno costs 1/6 and (double quantity) 2/6.

The words Eno and 'Fruit Salt' are registered trademarks.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR

DEFENCE LOAN OF £250 MILLIONS?—SHIPBUILDING SHARES—ROOSEVELT, HUEY LONG, AND RECOVERY—BASE METAL SHARES—NEW FINANCE HOUSE

MANY people are surprised to see the stock markets so firm and so calm in the face of war—so pleasing a contrast to the slump in the Italian bourses which followed upon Mussolini's economic and financial mobilisation; but nothing has yet occurred to upset the City's faith in the breakdown of the League system and the British return to armed isolation. Mr. W. W. Paine, in this month's *Banker*, argues the case for a defence loan of £250 millions. He is not content to argue that if the League system collapses we shall be forced to spend more on armaments. He declares that, of all the varying forms of public works, the reconstruction of the fleet would give the greatest and widest stimulus to trade and would give it to the greatest extent in those distressed areas in which it is most required. This specious argument, of course, finds enthusiastic support on the Stock Exchange, which is looking forward keenly to the coming boom in shipbuilding and allied company shares. It is not for me to show Mr. Paine that expenditure on housing creates the maximum employment, direct and indirect, attributable to a public works policy, but it seems a pity that when our minds should be directed to the creation of new industries likely to attract labour away from the distressed areas, we should be advocating the expenditure of loan money just to keep the distressed areas alive for another five or ten years. If we are to be forced to spend £250 millions on armaments over a period of years, there is a case for raising the money by borrowing, not by taxation, but it is not because capital expenditure on warships is so reproductive and economical.

* * *

His appetite whetted by the story of the £250 millions loan for rearmament, a reader has asked me for a list of shipbuilding shares. I am loath to comply, for the market prices have already been marked up with unseemly haste. But the following list may be of interest:

	Price Range 1932/34.	Present Price.	Last Year's Earnings. %	Last Year's Dividend. %	Earnings Yield. %	Dividend Yield. %
SHIPBUILDING.						
Hawthorn Leslie 10/- Ordinary	4/9–13/6	20/-	6.8	5	3.40	2.50
Swan Hunter £1 Ord.	8/6–18/-	23/-	2.9	3	2.52	2.6
John Brown 6/- Ord....	6d.– 6/-	18/-	—	—	—	—
J. Samuel White £1 6% Preference.	Not available.	18/- cum. arrears of 4/2 per share net.	Pref. Div. covered 3 times.	—	—	—
Fairfield 6% £10 Preference.	15/–50/-	72/6 cum. arrears of 46/6 per share net.	—	—	—	—
BOILERS, ETC.						
Babcock and Wilcox £1 Ord.	31/0–48/-	51/9	9.4	8	3.63	3.09
Yarrow £1 Ord. ...	11/3–41/3	60/6	29.0	10	9.61	3.32
Clarke Chapman £1 Ord.	9/3–17/-	24/9	7.4	5	5.91	4.04
Richardson and Westgarth 6% £1 Pref.	2/3–10/6	6/6 cum. arrears of 5/2 per share net.	—	—	—	—
IRON AND STEEL.						
Vickers 6/8 Ord. ...	5/0–11/6	17/6	6.1	6	2.32	2.29
Consett Iron £1 Ord....	3/7½–7/10½	11/-	—	—	—	—
Consett Iron £1 8% Pref.	10/7½–22/1½	28/- cum. arrears of 10/6 per share net.	—	—	—	—

If I classify these shares in order of investment status, Vickers, Babcock and Wilcox, Swan Hunter and Hawthorn Leslie would come first. Clarke Chapman of the smaller companies appears the cheapest. Among the speculative shares John Brown is popular. A dividend of 10 per cent. tax free is expected for the current year and earnings of about 20 per cent. Samuel White and Fairfield have recently had orders for destroyers which have brought in buyers of the dividendless preference shares. I have included Consett because it is the chief producer of ships' plates on the North-East Coast.

* * *

What really killed Huey Longism was not the assassin's bullet but last week's letter of President Roosevelt to Mr. Roy W. Howard, the newspaper proprietor. Mr. Howard had written to say that business men still lacked confidence because they feared further "reform" legislation. Mr. Roosevelt replied that the Administration had come into power pledged to a drastic legislative programme and had considered it desirable to achieve its objectives as expeditiously as possible so that "the public might know the modifications in conditions and rules of economic enterprise which were involved in our programme." He added: "This basic programme has now reached substantial completion and a breathing spell is now at hand. . . . It is a source of great satisfaction that at this moment conditions are such as to offer further substantial and widespread recovery." On the assurance of no further interference in business, Wall Street not only took breath but heart. Was it not clear that the President had now determined to fight the coming election on the issue of recovery, not reform? When the Supreme Court killed the N.R.A. I confess that I jumped to the erroneous conclusion that Roosevelt would fight on the question of constitutional reform and entice the Left forces away from Huey Long. Apparently, the President discovered that the immediate effect of a serious challenge to the American Constitution would be an amalgamation of the conservative section of the Democratic party with the Republicans which would probably result in his defeat. The swing to the Right, it seems, had already been much greater than the swing to Huey Long and the "share-our-wealth" campaign. The President's letter to Mr. Howard finally recaptures the lost "Right." Some three months ago a politician friend, whom I refused to believe on principle, wrote: "If Mr. Roosevelt chooses to inject a measure of confidence into the economic system he can come back on a trade revival (i.e., on a soaring Wall Street), and to predict that he will ultimately adopt this course is pretty safe." These politicians surely understand one another.

* * *

If the investor on this side of the Atlantic is too nervous to enter the American market he might consider, as a *pis aller*, buying the equity shares of "commodity" companies dealt in on the London Stock Exchange which would benefit directly from the recovery of American consuming power. In 1929 the United States accounted for 53 per cent. of the world consumption of copper and 49 per cent. of the world consumption of tin. Last year the corresponding American percentages were 29 per cent. for copper and 36 per cent for tin. It may be said that base metal shares generally provide a safe medium for taking an interest in American recovery. For example:

	Present Price.	Last Dividend.	Estimated Dividend.	Yield, %.
Amalgamated Metal Corporation £1 Ord.	24/-	5%	6%	£4 3 6 on 5% £5 0 0 on 6%
Imperial Smelting £1 Ord.	14/9	—	—	—
Zinc Corporation 10/- Ord. shares.	40/7½	15%	30%	£3 14 0 on 15% £7 7 9 on 30%
Selection Trust 10/- shares.	13/-	—	—	—
Roan Antelope 5/- shares.	28/-	Nil	15%	£2 13 6 on 15%
International Nickel, no par value.	$29¼ N.Y.	80 cts.	80 cts.	£2 14 9 on 80 cts.

Selection Trust needs a word of explanation. About 40 per cent. of this company's investments consists of a holding in American Metal Company, which in turn holds 36 per cent. of Roan Antelope and 55 per cent. of Rhodesian Selection Trust which controls Mufuliva. Selection Trust also holds 23 per cent. of Trepca Mines and about 40 per cent. of Consolidated African Selection Trust (industrial diamonds). A complex set-up, but full of promise.

* * *

One of the first finance houses in America to acclimatise itself to the New Deal and the new banking laws was the First Boston Corporation, the security offshoot of the First National Bank of Boston. This year the First Boston has been in most of the big syndicates underwriting the Government bond issues and utility company conversions and has made a lot of money. Its shares, now quoted at 53 N.Y., are expected to reach earnings of nearly $6 this year. The First Boston is now showing further enterprise by backing a London finance house under the name of First British American Corporation, with an initial capital of £200,000, of which the chairman will be Mr. J. W. Hambuechen, who is a director of the First Boston, a partner of the private banking house of Michelis and Co., Zurich, and formerly a partner of A. E. Wassermann. Among the directors is Mr. Robert Boothby, M.P., who is resigning from the Stock Exchange. With this announcement comes the news that several partners of J. P. Morgan and of Drexel have formed a new company, Morgan, Stanley and Company, for the purpose of underwriting and financing, with a capital of £1,500,000. It is plain that bankers as a class are not yet dead, and it is interesting to see one of our enlightened young Tories standing for international finance and American co-operation.

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH. The Dominant Sex. W., Sat.
ALHAMBRA. Tulip Time. Wed. & Sat.
COLISEUM. BALLET Season. W., Th., Sat.
DRURY LANE. Glamorous Night. W. & S.
DUCHESS. Night Must Fall. Wed., Sat.
GLOBE. Accent on Youth. Wed., Sat.
LYRIC. Tovarich. Wed., Thurs.
PHOENIX. The Unguarded Hour. Thurs., Sat.
QUEEN'S. Wind & the Rain. Wed. & Sat.
S.MARTIN'S. The Two Mrs. Carrolls. Tu., F.
STRAND. 1066 and All That. Tu. & Thurs.
VAUDEVILLE. "Stop-Go!" Mon. & Sat.
VICTORIA PALACE. Vintage Wine. W. & S.
WYNDHAM'S. Sweet Aloes. Wed. & Sat.

OPERA and BALLET

COLISEUM. Charing X. Tem. Bar 3161.
BALLETS
de Léon WOIZIKOVSKY
and FULL CORPS DE BALLET.
Evg. 8.30. Wed., Thurs., Sat., at 2.30.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30. Tem. 6404.
THE DOMINANT SEX.
By Michael Egan.
LONDON'S BEST PLAY. (TENTH MONTH).

ALHAMBRA, Leicester Sq. Whitehall 2525.
EVGS. 6.15 & 9. Mats. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
TULIP TIME.
GEORGE GEE, STEVE GERAY,
JEAN COLIN, SYDNEY FAIRBROTHER, BERNARD CLIFTON.
Prices (including tax) 10/6 to 1/3.

CAMBRIDGE. BERNARD SHAW SEASON.
EVENINGS, 8.15. Mats., Thurs., Sat., 2.30.
PYGMALION.
Esme Percy. Margaret Rawlings. Barbara Everest.
Next Play, "*THE APPLE CART.*"

COMEDY. EVENINGS at 8.30. Whi. 2578.
Mats., TUESDAY & FRIDAY at 2.30.
HENRY KENDALL & NANCY O'NEIL in
SOMEONE AT THE DOOR.
OVER 100 PERFORMANCES

DRURY LANE. 8 p.m. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
MARY ELLIS, IVOR NOVELLO in
GLAMOROUS NIGHT,
with LYN HARDING, BARRY JONES.

DUCHESS. (Tem. 8243.) Evgs. 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
EMLYN WILLIAMS in his own Play
NIGHT MUST FALL
ANGELA BADDELEY MAY WHITTY

GLOBE. (Ger. 1592). Evgs. 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
Samson Raphaelson's Comedy,
ACCENT ON YOUTH
Nicholas Hannen, Greer Garson, Mary Glynne.

LYRIC. (Ger. 3686.) 8.30. Mats., Wed., Th., 2.30.
Gilbert Miller presents
TOVARICH.
CEDRIC HARDWICKE, EUGENIE LEONTOVICH.

PHOENIX. Tem. 8611. EVGS., 8.30. Th., Sat., 2.30.
GODFREY TEARLE, RACHEL BERENDT in
"THE UNGUARDED HOUR"

QUEEN'S. Evgs., 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30. (Ger. 4517.)
THE WIND AND THE RAIN.
London's Longest Run. Now in its 2nd Year.
CELIA JOHNSON. ROBERT HARRIS.

ST. MARTIN'S. Tem. Bar 1443.
Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Tues. & Fri., 2.30.
THE TWO MRS. CARROLLS
Leslie Banks, Elena Miramova, Louise Hampton.

SAVOY. 8.45. Wed. Thurs., 2.30. (Tem. 8888.)
FLORA ROBSON and OSCAR HOMOLKA in
CLOSE QUARTERS
By W. O. Somin, adapted by Gilbert Lennox.
The play produced by Irene Hentschel.

STRAND. (Tem. Bar 2660.) Smoking.
Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Tues. & Thurs., 2.30.
1066 AND ALL THAT. A Revue.
"THIS JOYOUS JOKE."—*Daily Telegraph.*

THEATRES—continued

VAUDEVILLE. 8.30. Mon., Sat., 2.30.
Mary BRIAN, Douglas BYNG, Dorothy WARD,
in Charlot's Revue, **"STOP-GO!"**

VICTORIA PALACE. 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
SEYMOUR HICKS in
VINTAGE WINE,
with JULIA NEILSON.

WYNDHAM'S. Temple Bar 3028.
Evenings 8.30. Matinees, Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
DIANA WYNYARD in
SWEET ALOES, by Jay Mallory.

PICTURE THEATRES

ACADEMY CINEMA, Oxford St. Ger. 2981.
ELISABETH BERGNER in
"DER TRAUMENDE MUND" (A),
and RAIMU in
"CES MESSIEURS DE LA SANTÉ" (A).

EVERYMAN (Opposite Hampstead Tube Station).
Monday next, September 16th, for Two Weeks.
The French Success,
BARCAROLE (A), and
John Grierson's *WEATHER FORECAST.*

KINGSWAY HALL, Kingsway, W.C.2.
A new Russian première—Alexander Room's
THE GHOST THAT NEVER RETURNS.
(From a story of S. America by Barbusse), also
"*BUILDING THE WHITE SEA-BALTIC CANAL,*"
SAT., SEPT. 21st *only*, at 3, 6, & 8.15 p.m.
Tickets: 3s. 6d., 2s. 6d. (bookable), 1s. 6d. & 1s. (at doors).
Book now: KINO FILMS LTD.,
84 GRAY'S INN ROAD, W.C.1.

CONCERTS

QUEEN'S HALL.
B.B.C. PROMENADE CONCERTS.
NIGHTLY, at 8.
FORTY-FIRST Season Conducted by
SIR HENRY J. WOOD.
THE B.B.C. SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.
Tickets, 2/-, 3/-, 5/-, 6/-, 7/6 at
B.B.C. BROADCASTING HOUSE, W.1.
Chappell's Box Office, Queen's Hall, & Agents.

REPERTORY THEATRES

CROYDON **Repertory.**
Evenings 8. Saturday, 5 & 8.15.
Richard of Bordeaux. By Gordon Daviot.

HARROGATE **White Rose Players.**
Evenings 8.15. Sat., 6.35 & 9.
The Shining Hour. By Keith Winter.

LIVERPOOL **Playhouse.**
Evenings, 7.45. Sat., 2.30.
Youth at the Helm. By Hubert Griffith.

NORTHAMPTON **Repertory.**
Evenings 6.30 & 8.50.
Marriage à la Mode. Dryden Festival.

The Repertory Theatres whose announcements appear above are members of The Association of Repertory Theatres. *For information concerning Theatres belonging to this Association, or qualified to belong to it, apply to the Honorary Secretary, Bache Matthews, 7 Tavistock Place, London, W.C.1.*

RESTAURANTS

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